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**Spring Football
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on the cover...

For the fourth year in a row, the Nebraska gymnastics team won the NCAA national title. There's no doubt about who's No. 1 as seniors Jim Hartung and Steve Elliott hold aloft the national title trophy. Randy Hampton preserved the moment for all of us.

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Jim Hartung Dynasty Ends With Perfect (Four) Score

The emphasis was on the team, and the strongest assemblage in collegiate gymnastics history responded with the record.



Hartung on pommel horse

Jim Hartung, the little superman from South Omaha whose impish grin suggests he knows something you don't, stepped out on the floor in the Bob Devaney Sports Center arena for his final bow as a Cornhusker.

He was flooded by an appreciative ovation from a home crowd that had just watched him tuck away the seventh individual NCAA gymnastics title of his career. At his side was Joe Gialombardo (Illinois, 1940), the only other gymnast in history to win seven.

Number seven was testimony to Hartung's pluck. It came on the parallel bars, the apparatus that was his nemesis throughout his career and especially earlier in his final collegiate competition.

Hartung had one more bit of business late that Saturday night in early April during the fourth session of the three-day NCAA meet. The final event was the high bar. Victory there would let Hartung stand alone with eight career golds.

Hartung's routine was nearly flawless, his dismount solid. It earned a 9.8 (10 is perfect) for the lead. Fellow Olympian Peter Vidmar of UCLA

followed up with a 9.9 to snatch it away.

Vidmar, again. The day before, the Bruin star had spoiled Hartung's bid to become the first collegiate gymnast to win three outright all-around championships.

For raining on their favorite son's parade, the majority of the 10,851 on hand rewarded Vidmar with a standing ovation, which ironically, was testimony to the impact Hartung has had on Nebraska gymnastics.

Four years ago, freshman Hartung led a brash band of Husker upstarts to Baton Rouge, La., and upset the established order for Nebraska's first NCAA championship. As a senior, he was the ringleader (also five other events) of the most dynamic collegiate gymnastics team ever assembled.

While running away with a fourth straight national championship, the Huskers raised their own year-old national scoring record from 285.95 to 286.45.

Starting with Baton Rouge in 1979, Hartung, more than anyone, was responsible for captivating a football-oriented state, building an unprecedented following and educating it

in the fine art of mastering the still rings, parallel bars, high bar, vault, pommel horse and floor exercises.

Such education was apparent with the warm reception for excellence, no matter the uniform. Thus repeated standing ovations for Vidmar and others with high marks.

"Four years ago," Nebraska Coach Francis Allen said, "When Jim Hartung signed with us, we said, 'Damn, we've got something.' Reflecting back, we did have something. To me, this national championship is the best. Next year, we'll look back and say, 'Boy, four championships are something.'"

"This one was easy (UCLA was a whopping 4.65 points behind despite a school record of 281.80, and Penn State was third at 275.65). Next year won't be so easy. My dynasty is graduating." He nodded in Hartung's direction.

"He didn't win them by himself, but he was awfully influential. Because we got him, we got Phil Cahoy. Then we got Scott Johnson and Jim Mikus. It was just a snowball effect. He was the little center. He was the little snow granule we started with," Allen said.

The snowball rolled up to the victory platform where the all-around All-

Americans were introduced. First and third went to UCLA's Vidmar and Tim Daggett. The rest of the top six were Nebraskans: Hartung was second, sophomore Mikus of Reading, Pa., fourth, junior Cahoy, Hartung's Omaha South teammate, fifth and junior Johnson of Colorado Springs, Colo., sixth.

Nebraska also dominated the individual championships. Hartung won an unprecedented third rings title and the parallel bars and Steve Elliott, the only other Husker senior, recaptured the floor exercise championship he won as a sophomore and tied Randy Wickstrom of California in the vault. Vidmar won the high bar and tied Steve Jennings of New Mexico on the pommel horse.

Neither Hartung nor Allen, however, could take credit for Elliott's success. He was a bonus, a world-class tumbler who came to Nebraska on a diving scholarship and decided to give gymnastics a try.

"I just thank the Lord for bringing me to Nebraska. There must have been some reason why I stumbled into this place on a diving scholarship," the enormously popular Amarillo, Tex., showman said.

Said Hartung: "There are no bigger and better things than the four years I've spent at Nebraska. This was the greatest team ever put together for the NCAA, and we got to show the best crowd in the U.S. just how good we were."

Nebraska was so good, UCLA Coach Art Shurlock said, that it "could probably beat the seventh or eighth best country in the world. They could beat Romania, probably even Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. We'd probably be around the 20th best team. We'd probably beat Puerto Rico."

The Huskers had placed the team championship as highest priority. Only Illinois (1939-42) had won four in a row. The record came next.

But the three-day carnival, attended by 28,086, focused initially on the all-around competition, starting with a compulsory round Thursday night.

Ominously, Cahoy, who later failed in the defense of his high bar and parallel bars championships, got hung up on the rings, fell and took an 8.25. He rallied in the next five events from 23rd out of 27 entrants to sixth.

Johnson, who had been forced out of the Big Eight championships two weeks

earlier by a bad back, and Hartung were smitten by the parallel bars, taking 8.8 and 9.3, respectively.

After the compulsories, Hartung trailed Vidmar 58.15 to 57.65. Five-tenths is a huge sum to overcome at the upper levels heading into the optional round, and Hartung said, "I'd say it's insurmountable. I haven't beaten by 5/10ths in a long time.

"I can't think about Peter. That'll just screw me up. It's going to start tomorrow, and we'll just go out and kick butt Saturday in the team finals. The team's hot."

Allen was undaunted by the compulsory showing. "You can't win 'em all, can you?" he joked. He was elated with Johnson's fifth-place performance, coming off the injury.

"We thought we wouldn't be able to use him until Saturday. We were thinking about holding him out of the compulsories anyway. He gets hurt again, and we're stuck," he said.

Soph Mikus was the brightest Husker light of the opening round. The 56.95 was his all-time best round. "I do pretty well in the compulsories. I've been drilled pretty well in the basics," he said. "I'd like to win the thing, but, realistically, I don't think I'm quite in the same class as the Hartungs, Vidmars and Johnsons."

Allen was "a little disappointed, but it's going to be a big weekend. It's just taking a little longer for the cream to rise to the top," he said.

Cahoy said, "The important thing is Friday night and Saturday. I don't care how we do in the all-around...just as long as we win the national championship."

In the all-around optionals Friday night, Hartung whittled Vidmar's lead to .35 with a 9.75 on rings, but a 9.9 by Vidmar on the pommel horse stretched the margin back to 5/10ths and an eventual 116.30 to 115.80 victory over Hartung.

"I'm getting up there, but Jim is probably one of the best collegiate gymnasts, if not the best, we've ever seen," Vidmar said. "The growth in competition can all be traced to what Nebraska has done with Jim here."

Allen congratulated the winner. "You looked too good. Sure you don't want to transfer schools?" he quipped. To Shurlock, the UCLA coach, he said, again laughing, "Your first NCAA all-around champion, huh? Hope it's your last."

The top 10 all-arounders held their places in the optionals. As he predicted, Hartung couldn't overcome his first-round mistake. "Things are getting tighter. Now it's one mistake and you



Johnson on parallel bars

can kiss it," he said.

More important to the Huskers, they had improved with each event and outscored UCLA 285.80 to 281.05.

"Hartung and Johnson put too much pressure on themselves in the all-around," Allen said.

"Nah," Hartung said. Digging his coach, he said "Francis puts pressure on me. It's a relief. I'm disappointed, but there are more aspects to the NCAA than the all-around. I gave it 100 percent.

"Tomorrow's it. It's the national championship. That's all we have to think about. I'll compete against Peter Vidmar a lot more times, but this is the last time I'll compete for the University of Nebraska."

Mikus, the newest Husker star, said, "I'm relieved that's over. I hit 12 sets without a major break. Tomorrow's a new ballgame. James (Hartung) told us before we started that this is our show."

In the team finals, Nebraska went 9.2 (Mike Bowers), 9.5 (Mikus), 9.35 (Cahoy), 9.55 (Johnson) and 9.7 (Hartung) on rings in the first event. Vidmar finally slipped to a 9.2 on floor ex to give the Huskers a 4/10ths lead.

Nebraska took the floor next, with Cahoy and Mikus going 9.5, Johnson 9.6, Elliott 9.7 and Hartung 9.7. Bruins Daggett and Chris Caso took 8.85 and 8.75, respectively, on the pommel horse and the lead jumped to 2.25.

After that, the only competition was the record. The Huskers bettered their preliminary marks in every event, and Hartung bested Vidmar 58.15 to 57.75.

As the Huskers collected their championship hardware, their rivals from UCLA and Penn State rushed onto the floor to pump their hands in a show of sportsmanship and admiration.

"How do you improve on this one?" Scotty Johnson asked. "You have to go across the ocean."

Mikus took his championship plaque back from his mother. "Mom, what if I give you last year's and I keep this one," he said.

Later that night, Hartung tacked on two more individual titles, John Balluff made all-American with third on the pommel horse and Elliott, who had endured a disappointing season of injuries and illness, provided the greatest drama.

Elliott was last up in floor exercise and was looking at a 9.8 posted by Mark Spallina of Arizona State. "I couldn't play it safe, so I added a little extra. I did a double full twist with a punch-front flip. When I landed, my feet were together and my arms were out. I could hear the crowd just swallow me up, and I knew I had it."

Elliott drew a 9.85 for the winner. He was engulfed by his teammates and responded to a standing ovation by blowing kisses to the crowd.

Elliott faced more improbable odds in the vault when he was next up after Wickstrom hit a 9.9. "I think I'll just go home," he said.

Instead, Elliott, the only American to pull off a tsukhara with a half twist, hit his specialty cleanly for a tying 9.9. "Winning the team title was the cake. Winning the floor exercise was the frosting, and taking the vault is like putting the cherry on top," he said.

Watching it all was a youngster named Chris Riegel of Reading, Pa., who is the nation's top-ranked prep gymnast. He was in Lincoln for his official recruiting visit.

"Nebraska is the best. That's all there is to it. Jim Hartung is the boss," Riegel said.

Johnson said, "Jim Hartung's don't come along very often. Riegel is close. He's the only one on the senior elite team who isn't in college."

After wrapping up No. 4, Allen left to take Riegel to his hotel. The Husker coach pointed to a press room wall containing pictures of Hartung, Cahoy, Johnson, Mikus, et al.

"We've got a spot for you right up there," Allen said, working on a fresh dynasty. ●



Nebraska senior Steve Elliott brought the house down with a floor ex routine that drew a 9.85 mark from the judges to overtake Arizona State's Mark Spallina. He followed that with a 9.9 on the vault to gain a tying total in that event.

Time For NU Colts To Get Frisky

It is a time for the veterans to withstand challenges from rookies and for coaches to teach and get to know the players.

Ah, spring. For the football coaching staff, it is the most enjoyable time of the year. The coaches are teachers again, getting back to basics, no recruiters.

"You don't have the time pressures," Cornhusker Coach Tom Osborne said. "You're able to get to know the players a little better — those on the scout team as well as on the top units."

For the players, spring practice is a fresh start. Upperclassmen who have paid their dues and start out on top are not allowed to become comfortable because of the challenges from the upstarts down the ranks.

For the 1981 redshirts, it's a coming out party. The veterans are "the stallions of the rodeo; we're the colts just getting out of the corral," said sophomore offensive guard Brian Kramer, shedding his redshirt and starting out on the third unit.

Spring practice is the time for the Huskers to fill 11 positions devoid of returning starters. Spring practice opened with lettermen at each of the spots. Seven redshirted sophomores were listed on the alternate units, which Osborne said was "about normal."

"There's added pressure being No. 1," said offensive guard Dean Steinkuhler of Burr, Neb., who moved up a notch.

For youngsters like soph Neil Harris of Kansas City, Kan., who was challenging veteran Pat Larsen at safety, sitting out a year of competition as a redshirt was difficult, "but you can put that behind you now. It helps you mature. It's looking up now; things can only get better."

Harris was trying to break into a secondary that lost four senior regulars. "With three real good corners last year, I was better off redshirting, especially since I was switching to safety. Now this

gives me a chance to start for three years," Harris said.

Kramer said the colts are especially frisky in the spring because "you don't want to spend another year on the scout team. Mark Behning (a former redshirt lineman from Texas) says you don't mind getting your butt kicked by All-

Americans like Toby Williams and Jeff Merrell. It's kind of fun. I don't see how a guy can get discouraged playing with those guys."

The 20 sessions of spring ball "can drag a little toward the end because there is no opponent to look forward to," Osborne said. Which is why he



Dave Rimington loosens up.

"During your redshirt year, you feel like your effort isn't being rewarded. You sometimes think, 'What am I do-

The new first-teamers in initial practices were Steinkuhler, offensive tackle Jeff Kwapick of Circle Pines, Minn., fullback Doug Wilkening of Littleton, Colo., wingback Irving Fryar of Mt.

"Last year, the coaches were a little more lenient in screwups. Now they don't let things slide. One good thing, though, you know that when the coaches stop yelling at you, you can forget it."

Rozier Races to Stardom Just Going With The Flow

*Pride of Camden
Woodrow Wilson rolled on
through Coffeyville and
settled in the NU spotlight
beside Roger Craig.*

By Tom Ash



Mike Rozier

Beatrice Rozier would have been surprised if Mike, the fifth of her six sons, was *not* the Big Eight's Newcomer of the Year and all-conference running back as a Nebraska rookie last fall.

"He's always been No. 1. He's been that way since the midjet leagues. It seems like he had MVP awards every year," she said.

Joe Famille, who coached Rozier at Woodrow Wilson High School in Camden, N.J., was no less certain that his prize would become an immediate sunburst on the Nebraska football scene. "We knew Mike was probably the best running back ever to come out of this area. He was destined for great things," he said.

The closest to Rozier in his formative years were positive. No question.

The coaches who assumed the tutelage for his college years were excited about Rozier's possibilities. He had the raw talent. But they had seen so many potential stars flame out. They were anxious to find out.

Frank Solich, Nebraska's freshman coach, was in his first year of recruiting on the east coast in January, 1980. He was in the football office at Pennsauken High in south Jersey, studying film of a Pennsauken tight end in a game against Woodrow Wilson.

Rozier fairly leaped out of the screen, grabbing his attention. "You could see very evidently he was a good running back," Solich said. Then he hustled

over to Camden.

"There was no doubt Mike was a great athlete. You'd have to be blind not to see he was exceptional. But no way could you predict how well he'd do. You don't know how well a kid will adjust," Solich said.

Rozier made a year's stopover at Coffeyville, Kan., Junior College to help with the adjustment before checking in as a Husker. He led the Kansas school to an unbeaten season and No. 2 national J.C. ranking.

Dick Foster, the Coffeyville coach, said, "I knew he was great, but I can't say I knew he was going to be *that* good. You just don't make all-Big Eight and run for 1,000 yards right off the bat."

But he did.

Rozier commanded the admiration of his new teammates with a 250-yard performance in an early-fall scrimmage and worked up to a share of the starting I-back position with holdover great Roger Craig by the Big Eight season. He rushed for over 100 yards in four of the seven unbeaten conference games and finished with 943 yards.

Along the way, he burned Oklahoma State with a 93-yard kickoff return and Kansas State with 93 yards from scrimmage. His 32.4-yard average on kickoff returns would have led the nation if he had had enough attempts.

In the Orange Bowl loss to Clemson, Rozier carried 15 times for 75 yards, threw a 25-yard touchdown pass, caught another pass and returned three kickoffs for 78 yards.

He was a consensus choice for the all-Big Eight backfield as a sophomore.

"His father and I tried to instill in Mike that not just his parents help him grow, but everyone who touches his life — his coaches, teammates, fans," Mrs. Rozier said.

Those who have touched Mike Rozier the most say that in addition to his obvious physical qualities, the immediate success is testimony to his coachability, solid upbringing, selflessness and the pure joy he derives from doing what he does best.

Then, too, the arrival of Guy, the sixth of the Rozier brothers might have helped.

"Guy was born 11½ months after Mike, so Mike missed out on some attention. He had to grow up a little faster. His brothers pushed him faster," Mrs. Rozier said.

The lineup of Gary, foreman for a pipe company and Beatrice, former teacher and current Planned Parenthood counselor, reads:

Garrison Jr., 28, a former defensive back at Glassboro State; Tony, 26; Joe, 24, a former defensive back at Westchester State; Billy, 23; Mike, 21 and Guy, 20, an ex-prep quarterback and now scholarship sophomore defensive back at Nebraska.

"My mother has over 50 grandchildren, and even when Mike was 2 or 3 she was afraid to let him play with the others. He was too rough and tough. He always played with the bigger kids," Mrs. Rozier said.

Mike started playing football seriously as an 80-pounder in a midget league when he was 12. "I used to be O. J.



Mike Rozier in full flight, showing the style that won all-star acclaim as a rookie.

Simpson; he was my idol," he said.

He played basketball and ran track, "but football was always my favorite. I like to get beat up every Saturday," he said, laughing.

He was an instant hit at Woodrow Wilson, as he was at Nebraska. He started as a freshman at fullback. "Mike was the first player to start all four years for us," said Famille, who was athletic director and line coach at Wilson during the Rozier years and is

now the head football coach.

"Michael was a self-motivated player, a self-disciplined player. Not only did he have great physical talent, but he had the right mental approach to the game. He kept the whole thing in logical perspective," Famille said.

Rozier gained over 1,000 yards each of his last three seasons, despite abbreviated campaigns the last two. A bitter teachers' strike his junior year limited his statistics and contributed to

his side trip to Coffeyville.

"The teachers struck after our second game. We couldn't practice at school or play home games after that. We played only three road games," Rozier said.

A faculty rift developed when the coaches ignored the picket lines and continued working. "Since we were on the team with them, some of the other teachers took it out on us," Rozier said. It didn't help that Rozier's mother was president of the PTA and switched her support from the strikers to the coaches.

As a result, Rozier had only a 1.9 grade point average instead of the required 2.0 when Nebraska, Penn State, Syracuse, Purdue, Oklahoma, Duke, etc., came calling. So a year in junior college was necessary.

Famille supported Rozier's contention.

"People don't realize that for a lot of kids, athletics is the only route out of the city. We didn't care about the strike. We were going to do our job," Famille said.

"A lot of teachers held a grudge against the coaches, and, as the pride and joy and symbol of our program, Michael took the brunt of it. It was very unprofessional and unfair to him," Famille said.

Rozier overcame that setback with the support of his Wilson coaches and family, and he maintained his perspective.

"So many of our kids here are from one-parent families. Michael is so fortunate to have two fine parents," Famille said.

"We always told Mike, 'Don't worry about me-first. You're somebody. Do the best you can, and it'll all come back to you,'" Mrs. Rozier said.

"We always instilled in him that his gifts are God-given. Take it naturally and build on it. Go along with the flow and not become overly impressed with yourself," she said.

Said Mike: "Sports kept me off the streets. All I wanted to do was get a scholarship and get out of there."

He gained 300 yards against Cherry Hill West in his best game as a senior. His final game for Wilson was against arch-rival Camden High. "We had a shoot-out," he said.

Literally.

"Two gangs got to arguing at a party the night before and it just carried over to the game. They started



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shooting it out. It was like Black Sunday (the movie), only with more shooting. We were on the field, and we just hit the deck.

"One guy got killed. They called the game off in the third quarter and called it a draw," Rozier said.

Eventually, Nebraska Head Coach Tom Osborne visited Camden. He kidded Rozier about the difficulty he had breathing polluted eastern air. "It didn't bother me much then, but I'm pretty aware of it now. I'm aware of a lot of things now," Rozier said.

"I was just hanging around, going to school and playing ball. I did a lot of partying. I wanted to get away from that. Nebraska has the kind of atmosphere you can raise kids in. There's not much crime.

"Nebraska wanted me as a person, not just as a football player — even after they found out I didn't make grades," he said.

Ironically, Rozier rejected Oklahoma because he didn't want to play in a wishbone backfield as he had at Wilson. When he arrived at Coffeyville, Foster installed the wishbone and put him at halfback.

"I don't care what kind of backfield you put him in," Husker aide Solich said. "It can be a wishbone, I-formation or veer. He's still a great back. He's a quick starter."

Rozier thought Lincoln was the wilderness...until he saw Coffeyville.

"I'd heard of Kansas but not Coffeyville. I thought of Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz. I went out looking for her house. I expected it to be a little city, but I found nothing but open fields and cows. The campus had about four buildings.

"But I liked it there. The people were nice," he said.

First, Foster had to instill some personal discipline in his urban import. "He wasn't real good about finding his way to class, but he got some discipline here. He's got everything it takes," he said.

Rozier said, "I had no choice but to go to school. I'm happy I made the choice. I got used to college life."

He missed his first two games at Coffeyville because of a shoulder injury, then gained 1,150 yards, led the team to a 10-0 record, Beef Empire Bowl championship and No. 2 national ranking.

Foster recognized right off that he had been presented a rare jewel when Nebraska steered Rozier his way.

Foster had coached former Missouri runner and five-year pro Tommy Reamon at Fort Scott and former Ohio State and current Dallas Cowboys back Ron Springs at Coffeyville. He also coached at Kansas for five years.

"I felt that Mike was farther along than anybody I'd had. He could do more things, like coming out of the backfield as a receiver and blocking. We had a halfback pass, with him throwing. Mike is really football smart. He picks things up.

"I told Ohio State they should red-shirt Springs his first year, and I was right. I knew Mike could play right away, but, no, I couldn't predict he'd have the year he did. We ended up No. 2 in the nation, and we wouldn't have without him."

"Mike's a very unselfish player."

Mike Rozier broke into the Big Eight like a bolt of lightning from an expected storm. And Nebraska fans have two more years to enjoy runs like the one he made against Oklahoma in the photospread on pages 32-33 of this magazine.

Solich said. "You watch the films — and I don't think you see this with every great back — and he runs out the fakes hard and he blocks hard. He shows up in plays even when he isn't carrying the ball."

When Foster was at Kansas, he once asked Head Coach Don Fambrough what made college and pro hall-of-famer Gale Sayers, the former Jayhawk, such a great back.

"Coach Fambrough said it was simple. Gale liked to practice; he loved the game. Mike is the same way. Those great ones are like that. A lot of guys have the talent, but ..."

The year at Coffeyville renewed the interest of recruiters, and Nebraska found itself locked in a serious duel with Pitt.

The Panthers offered scholarships to Mike and younger brother Guy. Nebraska matched the offer. The brothers joined up for a trip to

Pittsburgh.

"I took the trip because I wanted to see Guy. I was homesick after I did my time in Coffeyville, and Pitt is only four hours from my house. At the time I was serious about it. But my parents encouraged me to go to Nebraska," Mike said.

Although the Huskers were forced to recruit Rozier twice, Solich said, "You just continue to recruit him. You know he's going to get that much more exposure in junior college. We kept in constant contact. You've got to stay with it, but when you know the type of kid you're recruiting, it makes it easier to stay with it."

When Rozier arrived in Lincoln last fall, he admitted he was "pretty scared at first. This was big-league football."

He also found out that, like any new kid on the block, he would have to prove himself before he won total acceptance.

"People didn't know me. People were asking 'Can he really play?' Every day after practice everybody sat around the locker room talking about how things went. I sat by my locker, by myself. I felt out of place," he said.

Until his 250-yard scrimmage.

"I got the number system down pretty fast. I knew I could play, but I didn't know how fast. After that scrimmage, I knew I could play right then. I could relax. I was pretty tense," Rozier said.

The newcomer was worked in slowly during the non-conference games. "The coaches were checking me out," he said. Craig carried most of the load in the opening loss to Iowa. "I was new, and Roger was the veteran. They stuck with him, and I understand that," he said.

Eventually, Rozier and Craig worked out a 50-50 relationship at I-back. Junior Craig carried 173 times for 1,070 yards, a 6.1 average and six touchdowns. Rozier's numbers were 151 carries for 943 yards, a 6.3 average and five touchdowns.

The rivalry was uniquely harmonious. Craig and Rozier became close off-field pals and on-field cheerleaders for each other.

"We want to win," Rozier said. "I could maybe see some hard feelings if he wasn't doing the job, but Roger goes 100 percent. I like the competition. Twenty carries a game is enough. We both have the spotlight.

CONTINUED ON 53

Records Broken In Winter Conditioning

But it's just a sign of things to come after Husker gridders set up shop in the new Taj Mahal, Boyd Epley says.

Boyd Epley, Nebraska's strength coach, cautioned against drawing any hard conclusions just yet about how winter conditioning tests will translate into success on the football field.

Indications are, however, that data compiled during six weeks of P.E. 102P, the conditioning class, reveal a bigger, stronger, more agile Cornhusker squad this fall with greater endurance but a shade less sprint speed.

The class averaged 3.2 pounds heavier than its 1981 counterpart, knocked 30 seconds off its 1½ mile average time, improved in the vertical jump and agility run and added 11.3 pounds to its bench press and 9.4 pounds to its hip sled weight. Its 40-yard dash time was slower by 4/100 second.

"But that doesn't mean we're slow," Epley said. "We had exceptional speed in 1980 (4.857 average time compared to the current 4.897). We had 10 guys under 4.5 that year; this year we have seven."

Five individual records were established, and 26 position records were set in four major testing categories.

Sophomore walkon fullback Mark "Kid" Schellen of Wahoo became the strongest Husker in history with a 475-pound bench press that obliterated the old mark by 50 pounds. Freshman I-back Paul Miles of Princeton, N.J., replaced Jarvis Redwine as the fastest Husker with a 4.33-second 40-yard dash.

Schellen also set a snatch record of 245 pounds, and junior wingback Irving Fryar of Mt. Holly, N.J., set records of 10-6½ in the horizontal jump and 5.5 seconds in the agility run.

"These figures don't tell you much about what kind of team we're going to have this fall because so many walkons

and other students were allowed to enroll. We had about 200 in the class, and there was a great range of abilities. We're looking at a P.E. class. We'll have a better idea after we break down the top 44 players, the ones who will be on the field this fall, after spring practice," Epley said.

For instance, the team bench press average in winter conditioning was 297.2

pounds. The top 44 average last spring was 324, Epley said.

"We're satisfied with the improvements, but with these new facilities we're just getting started," he said. "We've made more equipment available to them."

The Huskers moved last winter into the new strength and testing center dubbed the "Taj Mahal" under the West



Mark Schellen smashes bench press mark by 50 pounds.

Stadium.

In 1975, Tony Davis became the first Husker back to bench press 300 pounds. Now the I-back *average* is 309 and fullback average is 351. "Times they are a-changin'," Epley said.

The most significant discovery during winter conditioning was Schellen, who played at UN-Omaha as a freshman, dropped out of school and walked on late last fall as a 255-pound fullback. He cut his weight to 228 and improved from 425 to 475 in the bench press, 29 inches to 33 in the vertical jump, 730 to 870 on hip sled and 4.9 to 4.56 in the 40.

"I have a feeling Schellen is going to fit right in, but remember I'm not a football coach, and he hasn't played football here yet," Epley said.

A couple of days after the final winter tests, Schellen and All-American center Dave Rimington, who benched 425 pounds, held a head-to-head contest on the incline bench press, which is more difficult than the bench press and a truer indicator of strength required for blocking. Rimington hit 375 while Schellen dropped out at 315.

"Schellen was a competitive weight lifter in Omaha, and he has great technique in the bench press," Epley said.

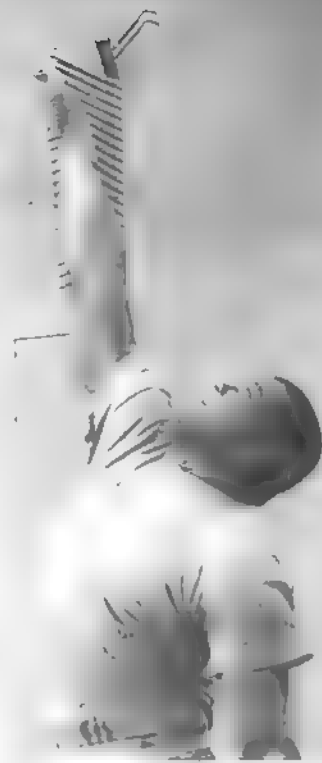
Among the players who have proved themselves on the field, Epley was most impressed with the marks established by wingback Fryar.

"He's showing he's a tremendous athlete. The school record for the agility run had stood at 5.9 for three years. Todd Brown (split end) broke it with a 5.75. Fryar was up next, and he ran a 5.5. The same day he horizontal jumped 10-6½ to break Allen Lyday's record of 10-3.

"He was the fastest on the team in the 40 with a 4.41 until Paul Miles broke Jarvis' 4.38 record with a 4.33. Irving stepped up and ran three times for an average of 4.31, but we found out he was wearing track spikes, so we disallowed it.

"So Irving is a great athlete who has become even better. He's going to be better than good, in my opinion, next fall."

Fryar, a true sophomore, ran 4.7 as a freshman. His vertical jump has improv-



Toby Williams sets defensive tackle vertical jump record.

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ed from 28 inches as a frosh to 35 inches, and he has added 50 pounds to his bench press.

Epley also has taken a keen interest in the split end duel between returning regular Todd Brown and Ricky Simmons, who was redshirted last year after lettering the year before.

"They battled all winter to break John Noonan's bench press record of 280 pounds. They both just missed 285. Ricky ran a record 4.39 40, and Todd set the vertical jump record of 31½. So they have quite a battle going on.

Schellen set a fullback record with a 4.56 40, and Doug Wilkening comes along with a 4.52. Nate Mason became the strongest quarterback in history with nobody noticing and jumped 31 inches for a record on a bad ankle," Epley said.

The player to watch this fall, according to Epley's assistant Mike Arthur, is sophomore defensive end Bill Weber of Lincoln. Weber, who redshirted last year, improved his freshman vertical jump mark from 23 inches to 32½, his 40 time from 4.88 to 4.66 and bench press from 270 to 315.

"Another position that has been interesting is tight end," Epley said. "Jamie Williams lost his 40 record (4.55) to Monte Engebretson (4.52), but Jamie set the bench record at 355. It lasted 20 minutes until Mitch Krenk broke it by 20 pounds. Mitch broke his own vertical jump record with 34 inches. So those three are having themselves a battle."

To help improve team speed, the Nebraska coaches brought in a Colorado antique dealer as a consultant. Dean Brittenham of Lyons, Colo., earned his credentials as a former N.U. assistant and head track coach at Colorado. Brittenham's prize pupil was



Middle guard Jeff Merrell strains on hip sled

offensive tackle John Sherlock.

"John ran a 5.5 40 as a freshman and only got it down to 5.35 last year. We were really concerned," Epley said. "He was always strong. If an athlete is slow, we can usually increase his leg strength and improve his speed. But he was already up to 800 on the hip sled.

"So we looked at his flexibility. Dean is an expert on developing speed, and in Sherlock's case, he helped immediately. His steps were too short. It was more a lack of form than power. He cut his time to 5.1.

"Scott Raridon, another tackle, cut his time from 5.2 last year to 4.9.

"The defensive backfield doesn't have the speed we're accustomed to, despite Ricky Greene's 4.44, but we're becoming noted for our strength in the secondary.

"Tim Holbrook set a record for monster backs with a 325 bench, and he just missed at 340, which would have made him the strongest defensive back we've ever had, and we've had two (Russell Gary and Rodney Lewis) make the All-American Strength Team," Epley said. ●

Team Averages

	1982	1981	1980
Weight	213.72	210.563	207.86
1½ miles	9:23	9:53	9:31
Vertical jump	27.21	26.56	26.2
Agility run	6.55	6.64	6.82
Bench press	297.2	285.93	276.7
Hip sled	663.3	653.92	642.71
40 yards	4.897	4.893	4.857

New Team Records

Bench press	Mark Schellen	FB	475
Snatch	Mark Schellen	FB	345
40	Paul Miles	IB	4.33
Horizontal jump	Irving Fryar	WB	10-6½
Agility run	Irving Fryar	WB	5.5 seconds
Frosh bench press	Ronnie Robinson	FB	385

New Position Records

Bench press	Schellen	FB	475
	Mitch Krenk	TE	375
	Sieve McWhirter	WLB	375
	Kurt Whiteman	SLB	400

40 yards

Tim Holbrook	QB	325
Nate Mason	QB	275
Greg Ditty	IB	360
Miles	IB	4.33
Doug Wilkening	IB	4.52
Paul Schellen	SE	4.59
Monte Engebretson	TE	4.52
John Sherlock	TE	4.74
Ricky Greene	LB	4.44
Tim Holbrook	QB	4.51

Vertical jump

Nate Mason	QB	31
Mark Schellen	FB	33
Irving Fryar	WB	36
Todd Brown	SE	31.5
Monte Engebretson	TE	34
Tim Holbrook	QB	30.5
Dan McQuinn	SLB	30.5
Scott Raridon	LB	36.5
Steve McWhirter	WB	740
John Sherlock	TE	820
Dan McQuinn	C	900
Doug Wilkening	IB	830
Todd Brown	WLB	800
Doug Wilkening	IB	685

Waiting For The Call.... Then What?

The transition from playing for your college to playing for money is not always as easy as setting up a bank account. Draft Day — before and after — is a pressure situation for college seniors.

By Virgil Parker

Ask any of the nation's top football players, who are now in the NFL, to recount the highlights of their career and they will probably:

(1) Have most of the facts about their biggest high school game badly confused;

(2) Recall the high points of their college days with fair accuracy;

But (3), be able to give you a detailed minute-by-minute account of their "Draft Day", a time that is just around the corner for the current crop of college seniors.

"I didn't sleep much the night before," recalls ex-Nebraskan George Andrews, a first-round pick of the Los Angeles Rams in 1979. "I finally got up about 4 a.m., had some breakfast and then just sat by the phone."

"It's a nervous time for anyone. Even though people had been telling me I was going to go in the first round, I couldn't help but be anxious — over whether I would or not, and wondering which team I would go to."

"The draft started at 9 a.m.," Andrews said. "About 9:30 the phone rang. I grabbed it. It was Dan Pensick (a Husker junior who was to be drafted by Kansas City the next season). He wanted to know if I'd heard anything yet. I just said 'No' and hung up on

him. I never forgot that. The next year I did the same thing to him."

Such pranks are common. Oklahoma's Dewey Selmon, knowing in advance that brother Lee Roy was going to be the first choice of the 1976 draft by Tampa Bay, was anxious to learn where he might go — and in what round.

"After tossing and turning half the night," Dewey says, "I got up the morning of the draft and sat by the phone. Nine o'clock came. Nothing. Ten o'clock came. Nothing. About 10:30 the phone rang. I thought, 'This is it!' I grabbed the phone. This guy said, 'Dewey Selmon? This is so-and-so with the Philadelphia Eagles. We've just picked you in the draft.' I thought, 'Pretty neat! That's a great team.' Then the guy started laughing. It was Rod Shoate (a three-time Sooner all-American who had been drafted the year before). I said, 'Get outta here, Rod,' hung up and went to class."

Less than an hour later, Dewey was also drafted by Tampa Bay — in the second round. Now, after six years together with brother Lee Roy on the Buccaneers squad, Dewey has been traded to San Diego.

The anxiety of draft day was over before it had a chance to start for Lee Roy. "Tampa Bay was in touch with me the week before the draft. They

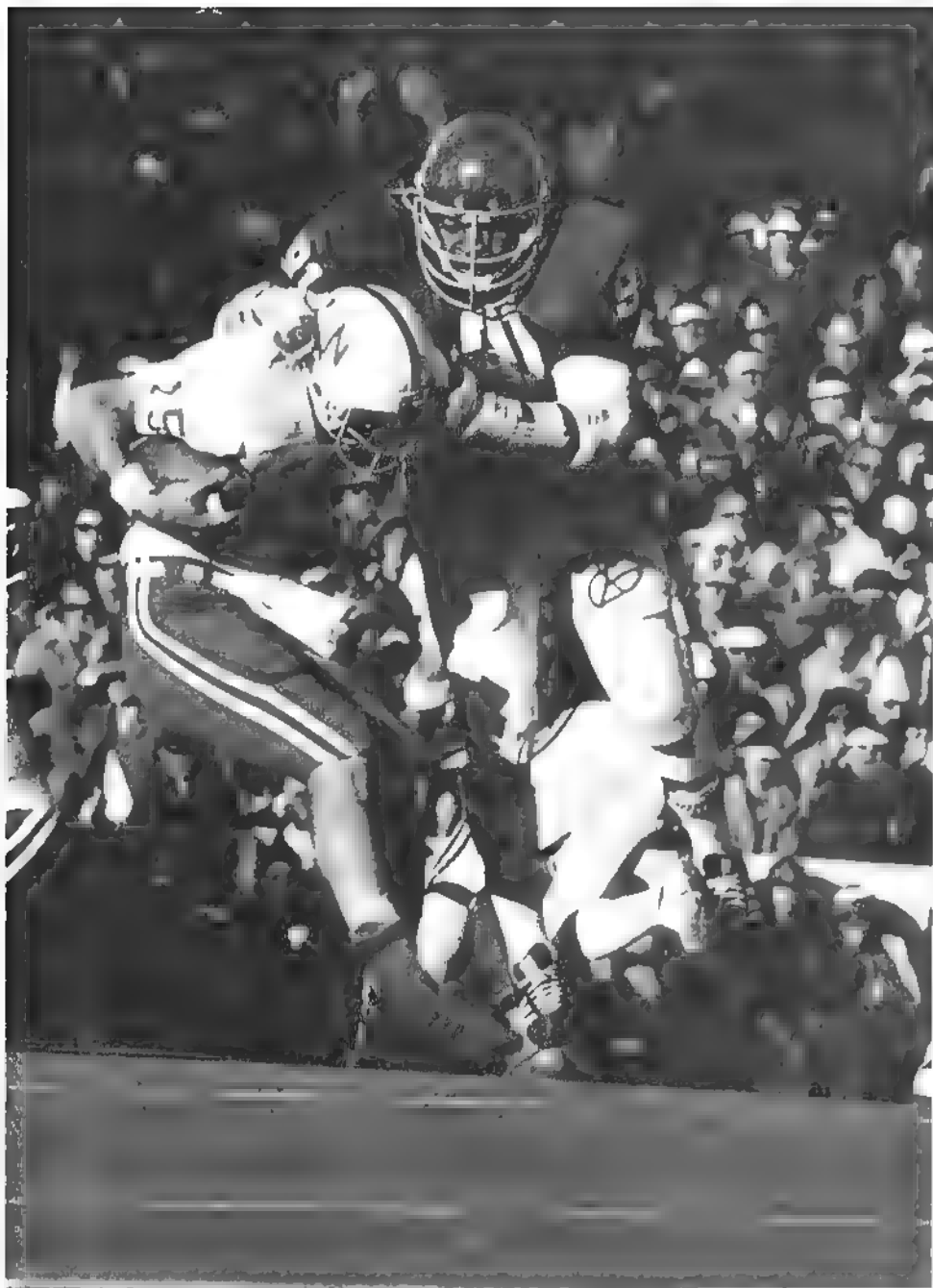
wanted me to go to New York for a press conference when they made me the No. 1 pick. So I didn't have to go through all the nail-biting the other guys did."

"The highlight of draft day for me," Lee Roy insists, "was when the Tampa Bay people asked me if it would be a problem to me if they also took Dewey. I said, 'Heck, no, in fact it would help us both a lot if you do.' They didn't draft Dewey because of me, but rather because of his own great ability. But we were very close — and still are — and it was great for us to be able to stay together."

"It would have been very hard for us to handle to have been separated at that time," Lee Roy says. "It's not as big a trauma now, although it will still be difficult. I'm really going to miss not being on the same team with him. But we've grown over the years to know that it couldn't last forever. And, knowing Dewey, he'll make the most of his opportunity at San Diego."

Many folks think Lee Roy and Dewey are twins because they were in the same grade throughout their schooling. Actually, Dewey is 11 months older, but because his birthday is in November, he didn't start school until the same year as Lee Roy.

"From what I had heard, I thought I might go to Seattle, which was an ex-



Dewey Selman of Oklahoma chases down Tony Davis of Nebraska in this 1975 contest in Norman. The two chased down pro contracts not too long after

pansion team, in about the third round," Dewey recalls. "In any case, it looked like Lee Roy and I were going to be separated for the first time in our lives.

"We had gone halvers on a lot of things. Like our stereo. But Lee Roy had bought most of the albums. So I went out the week before the draft and bought my favorite 10 albums so I'd have my own. Of course they were all duplicates.

"When I got back from my classes and found out I'd also been picked by Tampa Bay, my first thought was all

that dough I'd spent on those records. But I was thrilled to be going to the same team, even if it did mean we were going to have two copies of most of our albums.

"Now, after 27 years of our lives together, we are splitting for the first time," Dewey says somewhat sadly. "It's going to be completely different. But there are two sure things about football. You can't play the game forever. And you can't stay on the same team forever. I can't let it bother me. You just have to learn to adjust.

"Some people say I've been over-

shadowed throughout my career by my two brothers," Dewey adds. "But it's been a great security blanket to be surrounded by an older brother as great as Lucious and a younger brother as sup-per as Lee Roy. He's the one thing I'm really going to miss by leaving Tampa."

Draft Day and pro football didn't turn out to be as great an experience for the first of Oklahoma's famous brother trio. Lucious, who was the senior middle guard for the Sooners when Lee Roy and Dewey were starting sophomore tackles, is now preparing to start his seventh season as an OU assistant coach after a short-lived pro career.

An outstanding athlete, Lucious was named ABC's Defensive Player of the Year his senior season. Yet he wasn't drafted until the 16th round.

"Rich Glover of Nebraska (The Outland Trophy and Vince Lombardi winner the year before) and I came along about four or five years too soon," Lucious feels. "Lots of teams play a three-man defensive front with a middle guard now. But back then, most all the teams were playing an even front with two defensive tackles and two ends. Glover had been drafted pretty high by the New York Giants but hadn't worked out too well because of his lack of height (6-1). Then I came along the next year at an even six feet. I don't think they thought I was tall enough to be effective in the pass rush.

"I think Rich would be a super middle guard now," Lucious said. "And I guess I have to think I would do okay too. But, because of what had happened to Glover, I wasn't too surprised not to be drafted higher."

Lucious, who finished his career at Oklahoma in 1973, played as a sophomore and junior under Coach Chuck Fairbanks, while his final season was the first for Coach Barry Switzer.

"New England drafted me in the 16th round," Lucious recalls. "Coach Fairbanks was there then. And I know that it was a 'courtesy' draft on his part just because I had played for him."

Lucious feels the elimination of those lower draft rounds in recent years was a good move by the NFL. "Most of those real low draft picks were 'courtesy' choices. Yet the player wound up with no freedom of choice. He most likely was picked by a team he didn't have a chance of making. Now, the players in that category can pick and choose and sign as a free agent with a team that needs somebody at his position — a

team he feels he has a chance with."

Lucious admits he was disappointed at being drafted so low. "In fact," he admits, "it turned me off from the NFL. I didn't even consider trying out. I contemplated going to Canada, but the World Football League was starting up and that provided me the best financial opportunity. I signed with Memphis and played one full season and part of the next year. Then the league folded."

"When they went broke, George Allen wanted me to come to the Washington Redskins. He seemed real anxious to have me and I think I would have made the team. But I was tired of playing football and wanted to get out."

Lucious went to work for a large Oklahoma bank and then for Kerr-McGee Oil. "Soon after that, Coach Switzer approached me about joining his staff. It took me a long time to decide if I wanted to coach. But he told me, 'Give it a try. If you don't like it, you can always go back to the oil business.'"

Lucious joined the Sooner staff in January of 1976. "I have never regretted the decision I made," he said. "I probably would have made more money in the oil business, but you can't put a price on happiness."

Like Nebraska's Glover, Lee Roy won both the Outland and Lombardi Trophies. "I was happy to receive them for what they represented," Lee Roy says. "And though I'm sure things like that help when it comes to the draft, I hope it was my ability that made me the No. 1 pick, not some post-season honor."

Ex-Nebraskan Andrews, however, still questions just how the pro clubs make their choices. "You have to wonder how scientific the whole draft process is," the first-round pick by the Rams says. "All through my senior season I had been answering questionnaires from a whole bunch of NFL teams. After the season, I had been flying all over the country for physicals and workouts. Scouts would come on campus and have me do various agility drills and run the 40-yard dash for them. I probably worked out for 15 different ball clubs. One team, New Orleans, even flew me down there just to talk — to see what kind of a guy I was. In all that time, I never had received so much as a questionnaire from the Rams. Yet they were the team that drafted me as the 19th overall pick in

the very first round."

Andrews feels the only bad thing about the draft is the length of time from the end of a player's senior season until the selection process takes place (about four months). "That's a long time to go not being able to make any plans," he said. "The whole process is long. I started having guys call me, wanting to be my agent, the summer before my senior season. Then the pro scouts start coming around, watching practice in the fall and talking to you."

"It all starts you thinking about the pros and adds some extra pressure," Andrews continued. "In college you go out to win as a team each Saturday. But the attention from the pros adds pressure to your own personal performance. You start worrying about how you're doing as an individual."

The process of selecting an agent to

never offered any kind of deal in advance."

Andrews looks forward to the possibility of the new NFL collective bargaining agreement. "There will be no need for all the negotiating, agents or any of that if it goes through," he said. "The salary scale, based on years of service, will be all spelled out. It'll be a set wage scale. And I think it has a good chance of going through. I'm sure the owners would like to be rid of dealing with all the individual squabbles."

What does a high draft choice do with his first bonus money after scrimping by through four years of college? Did Andrews immediately run out to buy a Rolls Royce or full-length fur coat? Not the practical-minded Andrews. "I put it all in a Merrill Lynch ready asset account," he recalls. "Then I bought a house in Lincoln. At that time real

"In college you go out to win as a team each Saturday. But the attention from the pros adds pressure to your own personal performance. You start worrying about how you're doing as an individual." — George Andrews.

represent him was also a distraction, Andrews said. "The money they charge is not usually a big factor. They're all about the same. With me, it came down to finding someone I was comfortable with and a person I trusted."

"The agent earns his money," says Andrews, who as a scholastic all-American would have been better equipped to handle his own financial matters than most. "Not too many 22-year-olds fresh out of college could start negotiating a contract with some team's general manager who has been through that process hundreds and hundreds of times. I wouldn't have known where to start."

Did men who wanted to be his agent offer Andrews illegal inducements to sign early? "I read all the time about under the table deals," he answered. "It probably happens. A guy who is sure to be a high draft choice, but who is also broke, might be tempted to accept some advance money from an agent in order to buy some clothes, maybe a car. To have a few bucks in his pocket while waiting for the draft."

"All I can do is speak from my own personal experience, however. I was

estate was an especially good investment. And a lot of the other ex-Nebraska players in the pros were living in Lincoln in the off season."

If he were in Pete Rozelle's shoes, would Andrews make any changes in the draft procedure? "I don't know how they could handle it any differently," Andrews answered. "I was fortunate. I went to a team with a winning tradition which is located in a warm weather climate. But they need the draft system. If they didn't, everybody would want to go to the same teams. Not too many would be beating down the doors in order to get a chance to sign with Cleveland or Buffalo."

Dewey Selmon agrees. "I don't know what you could do differently without allowing a very few teams to have all the top talent," he said. "The draft is as much a part of pro football as the game itself."

The biggest thing facing pro football right now, Dewey said, is the threat of a strike. "I'm hoping we can settle the problem and not strike," he said. "But the problem of player salaries came even more into the picture when the owners signed a TV contract worth \$2

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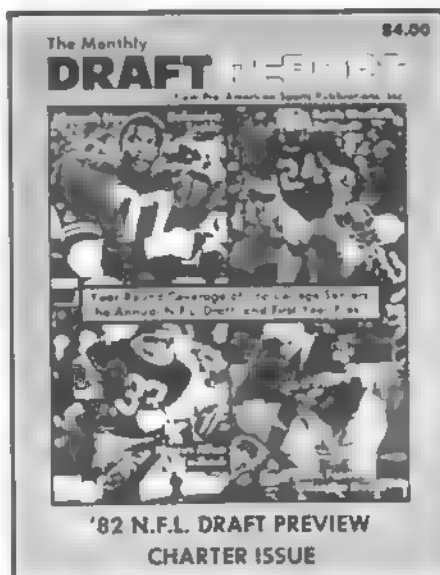
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billion. With that kind of money up front, every owner could pay every player in the NFL \$200,000 a season and still have \$18 million each left over every year."

Pensick, a fifth-round choice of the Kansas City Chiefs, says most players have a pretty good idea of what round they'll be drafted in. "There are rating lists that come out just before the draft," he said. "And they're pretty accurate. But, until it happens you get pretty nervous waiting."

Pensick felt especially good at being a fifth-round choice because he was having knee problems at the time of the draft. "Kansas City knew about it and figured I'd have to have an operation before I could play," he recalls. "But right after the draft they had a 24-year-old tight end who needed an operation on his wrist and he died on the operating table. That made them pretty nervous. So, when I attended the first mini camp, it was obvious I was going to need an operation, they traded me to New Orleans."

The Saints paid for some minor surgery and kept Pensick on the roster for the entire season on the injury reserve list. "My knee really didn't respond well enough so they decided another operation was needed. I came back to Lincoln where Dr. Clare (Nebraska's team doctor) did major surgery. New Orleans released me because of that, but now my knee is stronger than it's been for the past 3-4 years. I'm working out regularly and hope that I'll get another chance for the '82 season. It looks good for a free agent contract with New England. So things are looking up for me."

Ex-Husker Barney Cotton feels the prospect of pro football was probably less of a distraction for him during his senior season than for most any other player. "Nobody paid much attention to me," he recalls. "The scouts told me they didn't think I would even get drafted. Then, after I played in a couple of post-season all-star games, they started saying maybe I'd get picked in the eighth or ninth round. Things were looking better, but I wasn't anywhere near as anxious when the draft got underway as the guys who figured they'd get drafted all along. Next thing you know, before I had a chance to get nervous about it, I was picked by Cincinnati in the third round."

After spending the 1979 season with the Bengals — mostly on the bench —



Lee Roy Selmon (above) and Lucious Selmon (below) had different views of the NFL draft



Cotton was cut after the exhibition season in '80. "But I got picked up right away by St. Louis and wound up starting 10 games that very first season. In Cincy I probably wouldn't have played a down. Getting cut turned out to be a blessing in disguise."

The St. Louis veterans who had been injured — which gave Cotton his break — returned to action last season. "But I still played five or six full games," he said.

What are his prospects for '82? "I'm not saying I can win a starting job, but I'll give it my best shot," Cotton answered. "I'm backing up a six-year veteran. And in pro ball, when people get established it's hard to dislodge them."

Tackle Mike Fultz was a high Cornhusker pick in the 1977 draft. "I'll never forget that day," he said. "I sat by the phone like an anxious little kid. But honestly, what I was really working toward during my college days was my degree. That's what I knew would be most important through the majority of my life. If I didn't get drafted I wasn't going to cry about it."

As it turned out, Fultz was drafted by the New Orleans Saints as the second player chosen in the second round.

After four seasons with the Saints, a new coaching staff, headed by Bum Phillips, took over. In the middle of his fifth season, Fultz was released. "I just didn't fit in his plans, I guess," Fultz said. "He told me they were going to go with the younger guys. But, after just two weeks, I was signed by Miami. What an experience that was, being with a winner."

"There's not that much difference in the talent between a winner and a loser," Fultz feels. "It's a very fine line. It's just a lot of little intangibles, things that are hard to put your finger on. One thing was very obvious at Miami, however. Coach Schula is in charge. He leaves no doubt about that."

Fultz was signed to fill a vacancy left when another ex-Husker, Bill Barnett went down with an injury. "After four weeks, Bill returned and I was released again," Fultz said. Two weeks later he was signed by Baltimore.

The current crop of college seniors are looking forward to an even earlier time — draft day on April 27 — and the chance to experience the same thrills (and possibly, disappointments) as those who went before them. ●

Merlene Ottey joyfully holds aloft the trophy she won as the outstanding performer in the women's indoor national track championships

From A Barefoot Beginning, Merlene Gives Huskers' A World-Record Hotfoot



The Jamaican Connection's current standard-bearer fought off the temptation to go home and wound up leading the way to the Lady Huskers' first national championship.

By Mike Babcock

It took Merlene Ottey "about a week" to become bored with Moscow. During that time, she visited the Kremlin, went to the circus and watched early track and field competition on a rented television set in an unadorned, painfully-ordinary dorm room.

For excitement, she occasionally joined other athletes in water fights.

"There was hardly anything to do, and there weren't many places we could go," Ottey said, recalling her visit to the Soviet Union for the 1980 Olympic Games, not long after returning to Nebraska to begin her sophomore season with the Huskers.

The first two or three days in Moscow, the food wasn't bad, "but then they started serving the same things

over and over," she said. "We had a lot of rice, and I don't know what kind of meat we ate. They said beef, but it didn't taste like beef."

Ottey didn't visit Russia for its tourist attractions or its gourmet food, of course. She went there to run, and run she did. It took her less than half a minute to become the first woman athlete from Jamaica ever to win an



Merlene Ottey streaks to another title in the national indoor championships. (Photo by Richard Vogel)

Olympic medal.

In the finals of the 200 meters, she finished third behind East Germany's Barbel Wöckel and the Soviet Union's Natalya Bochina, crossing the finish line 16-hundredths of a second faster than the previous Olympic record. Ottey had not yet celebrated her 20th birthday.

Three Jamaicans left Moscow with Olympic bronze medals in 1980. Ottey was one. Former Nebraska sprinter Don Quarrie and a bicycle racer were the others.

Less than two years have passed since what was probably Ottey's greatest individual athletic triumph. During that time, she has established numerous world and collegiate records, won more than a dozen Big Eight Conference and AIAW individual championships, and been named the "Jamaican Woman Athlete of the Year" for a second time.

She has run times which rank among the best in the world, both indoors and outdoors, at distances ranging from 60

yards and 60 meters to 440 yards and 400 meters. According to NU head track coach Gary Pepin, Ottey is the "finest all-around sprinter in the world."

If Moscow was the scene of Ottey's greatest individual success, Cedar Falls, Iowa, was where she made her biggest contribution to the Nebraska women's athletic program. In early March, Ottey led the Husker track and field team to the AIAW national indoor championship, the Nebraska women's first national championship in any sport.

Ottey won two events and ran on two relays as the Huskers finished 20 points ahead of their nearest rival.

She broke her own world indoor record in winning the 300-yard dash. She set the Big Eight record in the 60-yard dash, finishing within five-hundredths of a second of the world record, and she ran on Nebraska's 880-yard relay team, which established a conference meet record.

Ottey also ran on the mile relay team,

long after the Huskers had wrapped up their national championship. Even so, she ran like the meet depended on it, pacing Nebraska in its third-place finish.

Ottey was the meet's only individual double-winner, defending titles in both the 60 and 300 — the 300 victory was her third in that race, at the national indoor championships, in three years. She was also Nebraska's only individual champion.

Even so, she wasn't the only reason the Huskers won the title. In fact, Ottey wasn't the only Jamaican who contributed points to the NU effort. Freshmen Janet Burke, who broke Ottey's Jamaican high school record in the 100 meters and tied her 200-meters record, and Marcia Tate, whose strength is in the longer sprints, also competed well on the 220-yard track in Northern Iowa University's UNI-dome.

Burke, from Spanish Town, Jamaica, finished second to Ottey in a remarkable 60-yard dash final which

saw Nebraska runners take four of the first five places, accounting for 26 of the Huskers' 84 points in the meet. After Ottey and Burke came junior college transfer Alicia McQueen in third place and freshman Debra James in fifth.

All four athletes ran personal best times as they came within one place of duplicating their finish two weeks earlier in the finals of the Big Eight Conference Indoor Championships. At that meet, they went first-through-fourth in the 60-yard dash.

Ottey led another big-point finish for Nebraska in the 300, with Burke running third and McQueen fifth.

Tate, from St. Ann, Jamaica, ran a personal best time of 1:20.54 in the finals of the 600 to finish fourth in a field which included a world best and American Collegiate record by Tennessee's Delisa Walton.

Rhonda Blanford and Marjan Goedhart, two other freshmen, also scored points for the Huskers. Blanford got Nebraska off to a good start in Saturday's finals by finishing third in the 60-yard hurdles, and Goedhart finished fifth in the pentathlon, completed the previous day.

Senior co-captain Nancy Kindig was second in the pentathlon competition, and Tami Essington finished fifth in the 1,000.

Ottey was joined on the winning 880-yard relay by James, Blanford and Jennie Gorham, and she ran with Gorham, Tate and freshman Ruth Pugh on the mile relay. Essington, Pugh, Gorham and Sara Stricker combined to finish fifth in the two-mile relay finals.

Clearly, and appropriately, Nebraska's team championship was the result of a team effort.

But there is no denying Ottey was the inspiration, just as her running has been the basis for Nebraska's reputation as a national power in women's track and field.

"Merlene is special. She's one out of thousands and thousands of people," said Pepin, who has coached her the last two seasons.

Ottey has been running competitively for only six years. She began by running barefoot on the grass after reading about Quarrie, who won two medals at the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal. Quarrie, who spent less than two years at Nebraska before transferring to Southern California, won the

200-meters gold medal and a silver medal in the 100 meters in Montreal.

His efforts captured Ottey's imagination as she followed them from her home in Hanover, Jamaica. Until then, her own running consisted mostly of jogging, but when Quarrie flashed down the Olympic Stadium 200-meter track in :20.23, Ottey projected herself into such a situation.

Now, the 200 meters is her favorite race. She ran that distance in her first high school competition in 1977, finishing :26.7 and failing to qualify for the finals.

Ottey's training program at the time came from a book her mom had bought her. She had no coach.

The next year, after a disappointing third-place finish in the 200 meters at the Junior Central America and Caribbean Games in Mexico City, Ottey changed schools, leaving Ruseas and enrolling at Vere Technical High School where she finally got some coaching and became the best young woman sprinter in Jamaica.

In one year at Vere, her time in the 200 meters dropped from :25.3 to :23.1. She improved her time in the 100 meters from :12.6 to :11.3.

Jamaica, a tropical island of some 2 million people, 100 miles west of Haiti and 90 miles south of Cuba, is a long

way from Nebraska, far enough that Ottey was offered a scholarship sight-unseen. That early offer was accepted despite advice from Quarrie, who told her to go elsewhere because of the climate. The decision enabled Nebraska to finish first in a race with schools like Texas Women's University, Villanova, Ohio State and Tennessee for the graceful world-class sprinter.

In all, 13 colleges offered her scholarships.

Nebraska's interest in Ottey was a result of reports from Clifton Forbes, a Jamaican who competed as a quarter-miler for the Cornhuskers in the late 1960s.

Forbes is one in a long line of Jamaicans who have competed for the Nebraska men's track and field teams. The Cornhuskers' Jamaican Connection began with two-time Olympian Keith Gardner, who was dubbed, the "Jamaica Jet" after arriving at Nebraska in 1956. Gardner finished fifth in the 110-meter high hurdles at the 1960 Olympic Games in Rome.

NU men's track coach Frank Sevigne brought Gardner to Lincoln in his first season as Cornhusker head coach after learning about Gardner

CONTINUED ON 57



Nebraska's Jamaican Connection came through big at the national indoor championships, with Merlene Ottey (center) joining Marcia Tate and Janet Burke





Big Red Mailbag

If you have questions or comments, you may write the
BIG RED MAILBAG
Box 83222
Lincoln, NE 68501

Dear Big Red Mailbag:

Being stationed here in Saudi Arabia, we see and hear little of U.S. football. My supervisor and I are graduates of the University of Nebraska and miss Nebraska football very much.

Although we enjoy reading *Huskers Illustrated* very much, we miss seeing the games. Is there any way we could buy a video cassette copy of the Oklahoma game and the Orange Bowl game? We have the Beta video tape playing systems.

James M. Achternhof,
American Embassy, APO, N.Y.



•One possible source is Livingston-Hamer Productions, 10714 Mockingbird Dr., Omaha, Neb., 68127. — ED.

Dear Big Red Mailbag:

I'm hoping Nebraska has had a great recruiting year. I have been a fan since Nebraska and USC tied 21-all (1970). I was looking at the game between Nebraska and Clemson. I thought for sure you had another championship. It kind of reminded me of the championship game with LSU (1970 season Orange Bowl) when the score was 17-12 in our favor.

Milton Stokes,
Lolla, Miss.

Dear Big Red Mailbag

In your article on the Orange Bowl, you made reference to the winner "that would surely wear the rings of national champions." Are rings really issued? By whom?

Tom Rooney,
Omaha, Neb

•Championship rings are customarily awarded by individual institutions. — Ed

Dear Big Red Mailbag

If we would have had Turner Gill, we would have beaten Clemson by a long ways. But next year, we will beat whoever we play.

Rowdy Smith, age 9,
Beatrice, Neb.

Dear Big Red Mailbag.

In 1954, football and basketball were Tom Osborne's main sports in high school at Hastings

According to the official program of the state basketball team, Hastings won the championship by defeating Omaha Benson. Tom was a member of that particular team, one of the greatest teams Hastings

ever had, coached by Earl M. Applebee

On the state championship team, Tom had to be one of the stars playing. Also in the football program he was in.

As a player and now a coach, Tom Osborne has set many examples of good sportsmanship.

Yours truly,
Lelon E. Alexander
Silver Creek, Neb

Dear Big Red Mailbag

When you look at the Cornhusker programs both major and minor, you find that the coaches teach the athletes to be real competitors, not only on the field but in their personal lives and in the classroom. I have three boys in school at the university and will have a daughter there in two years. If I had anyone who was athletically inclined, I would encourage them to take advantage of the opportunity to compete under the outstanding coaches at the university.

Robert W. Tucker,
North Platte, Neb

Dear Big Red Mailbag:

I have heard that Dave Rimington called the play that Nebraska scored on in the Missouri game (6-0 win). Yes or no?

Alan Pospisil,
Friend, Neb

•The play, a 34 trap, was sent in from the sideline by Tom Osborne. During a timeout before the play was run, center Rimington suggested that fullback Phil Bates, who scored the touchdown, follow the double-team block on the Missouri nose guard by Rimington and guard Tom Carlstrom. — ED

Dear Big Red Mailbag:

I enjoyed reading the issue on the recruits for '82 and was so proud of Kevin for being in it. Now that the pressure is off, we can look forward to next season. I'm so anxious to get to Lincoln and see where the next four years of his life will be spent. I'm sure he'll live up to his potential.

Kevin also made the Adidas Scholastic Magazine All-America Prep Team. Now it's back to the bottom and work up again. Looking forward to the next issue.

Betty Blackmer,
Minneapolis, Minn.

•Betty's son Kevin, a line prospect and outstanding high school pitcher from Minneapolis Central, chose Nebraska after also visiting UCLA, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa. — ED.

Dear Big Red Mailbag:

I am interested in obtaining a subscription to *Huskers Illustrated*, which was recommended by Norris Anderson in his Confidentially Speaking column in *The Football News*.

Robert E. Schaefer,
Bellflower, Calif.

Dear Big Red Mailbag:

In your January-February issue there was an article entitled "Rodgers Made Emotional Moment for Devaney." I commend your staff for including it in *Huskers Illustrated*. I read all the time, but never have I read with tears in my eyes as I did while reading this article.

I will never forget the name Rex Lowe and that tear-jerking scene in the locker room. About a year from now, I hope to land my first teaching and coaching job, and I believe an article of this type helps all those fans, players and coaches put winning and losing football games in their proper perspective. Thanks again from a proud subscriber.

Gary Culler,
Peru, Neb.

CORRECTION

The promotional literature recently received by *Huskers Illustrated* subscribers, contained price information on the Medallion Display Holder.

The price listing of \$29.95 is incorrect due to a typographical error.

The correct price for the Medallion Display holder is \$39.95, plus \$3.00 postage and handling. Please forgive any inconvenience this may have caused.



Dear Big Red Mailbag:

I would like to take this time to extend a well-deserved congratulations to the Nebraska football team. I live in Iowa, where all I hear is "Go Cyclones" or "How 'bout them Hawks." I like the Hawks, but my heart belongs to Nebraska.

I have always believed that there is no place like Nebraska. I'm looking forward to more years of Cornhusker football. I wish them good luck next season, and maybe this time they won't come up eight points shy of the whole load.

Mark Peterson,
Lake City, Iowa

Dear Big Red Mailbag:

I have enclosed a letter I sent to NBC after the Orange Bowl and their poor coverage. I really like my seasonal highlights plaque from *Huskers Illustrated*. I sure hope you keep making them year after year because I will buy one each year. Also, the Husker medallions are out of this world. I will keep buying them, too.

Tom Danaher,
David City, Neb.

Dear Big Red Mailbag:

I saw *Huskers Illustrated* mentioned in a sports magazine. I am a big Nebraska fan and would like to know more about this publication. Please send me details.

Dave DeMaio,
Hoboken, N.J.

•Done — ED.

Dear Big Red Mailbag:

I enjoy your magazine so much. It's great to read about Nebraska sports. Where do I write to get a schedule. I've got a collection dating back to 1970, and I don't relish breaking the string. Thanks for a great year of N.U. Keep up the good work.

Kevin L. Hughes,
Brule, Neb.

•Schedule cards may be obtained at the Sports Information Office, 116 South Stadium, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Neb., 68588 — ED.





Last January, Dave Rimington seriously considered bypassing his last year at Nebraska to turn pro. In March, Herschel Walker was ready to challenge the NFL rule about leaving college early to turn pro. Do you see their point of view in considering such moves?

"I can see the viewpoint of the players. There are some isolated cases where it might be to their advantage to turn pro. I can see where they would measure several hundred thousand dollars against the value of a scholarship. But I think you have to look at what's best for the vast majority of college football players, and the rule now is better than the alternative. When the lid was removed for basketball players, you had a lot of players who pleaded hardship, then only 50 percent, or less, made the pros. That 50 percent came out with less because once they turned pro, they couldn't get their scholarship back.

Basketball is a much different sport than football. High school players play against college players and college players play against pros in summer leagues. They can go out all summer long and measure their skills against each other. Obviously, you can't do that in football. Football is riskier. Basketball relies more on natural ability. Football requires more development and maturity.

I've seen a few football players who might have been able to go from high school straight to the pros. But that's very rare. Development is so important. Herschel Walker could, no doubt, play pro football right now. But he should be even better two years from now, and therefore, should be able to command a greater salary. I think the rule reads the way it does now because it meets the needs of the greatest number of athletes."●

EDITOR'S NOTE: If you have questions for Coach Tom Osborne, write to the *Huskers Illustrated*, Box 83222, Lincoln, NE 68501. We reserve the right to select only those questions we feel appropriate.

Ask Tom Osborne

It looks again as if Nebraska will have the toughest non-conference schedule in the Big Eight this fall. What are the advantages and disadvantages of that, and what's the solution to schedules that are booked as many as 10 years in advance?

"The thing that's affecting almost all schedules nowadays is economics and the high cost of traveling to places with a fair amount of distance. There are advantages and disadvantages to playing so-called 'name' teams. In our situation, we can get Utah State to come to Lincoln for \$100,000, and we can keep 70 to 80 percent of the gate. With a school like Iowa, even though it's close, it's more like a 50-50 split. The place where we get hurt, with home-and-home games with teams like Iowa and Auburn, is stadium capacity. We hold 76,000 and they hold more like 50,000. That's a lot of money. I don't know what the answer is unless you negotiate a more flexible contract.

You like to have some balance in your non-conference schedule. For instance, for this year, we dropped Florida State and put in New Mexico State and Hawaii. When we did that

several years ago, it looked like a good deal for us. Hawaii looked like a breather. Of course, that's no longer true. Hawaii was 8-3 last year and returns almost all of its team. They're about as big a problem as Iowa or Auburn. Penn State should be a great team again and New Mexico State is a team we should beat, if we play well. So, four out of our five non-conference games should be real challenges.

As far as solutions go, we're going to have to look more and more at travel costs. They're three times what they were when the schedules were first drawn up. A good case is 1984, when we go from coast-to-coast on back-to-back weekends. We go to UCLA one week and Syracuse the next. I can't think of a tougher challenge, travel-wise, since I've been here... and both schools have good football traditions. I don't have a lot of input on scheduling, but it's tough to schedule 10 years ahead. There's no way of knowing which teams are going to be good and which ones aren't. What looks like an easy schedule now may not be five years from now, and vice versa."

Billy Sims is swarmed by autograph seekers. Perhaps the one with the Detroit shirt knew something.

What Price The Glory

Football stars and coaches are in the spotlight, and enjoy the benefits of fame. But they sometimes pay a heavy price in pressure and loss of privacy.



Jack Mildren sat in a corner of the Oklahoma locker room wishing he were off somewhere by himself. Instead, he was surrounded by scores of newspaper and magazine writers, radio and television sportscasters and photographers. He had just come off the field from one of the bitterest losses a football player could imagine. The Sooners had lost the "Game of the Decade," 35-31, at home against Nebraska.

Tom Osborne had just seen his Cornhusker team go from a 17-13 victory and a trip to the Orange Bowl to a 20-17 loss and journey to Houston for the Astro-Bluebonnet Bowl. Oklahoma had done it again, staging a miracle rally in the final two minutes in Lincoln. But Osborne had no time to console his players or try to come to grips with the nerve-racking situation. The press — and the public — were waiting.

What price the glory?

Just ask those who have basked in it for a while. The glory of being a college football star or a successful coach in a big-time program is certainly an ego-builder. Most athletes will admit they love to read about their efforts and perform on television. They like having the radio interviews and broadcasts of their games back home to their family and friends. They get a charge out of being recognized on campus and in cities around the country.

And, of course, if they're good enough, they enjoy the money that can be made in professional sports.

But they do pay the price.

Billy Vessels won his Heisman Trophy at Oklahoma without even knowing much about who was in the running for it. There was no big promotion on television. There was no press conference. A member of the athletic department simply came and told him he had won it.

When Billy Sims won his Heisman 26 years later, the pressure leading up to the event was monumental. The questions from the press after each game, the interviews in between, the questions that often bordered on the ridiculous, the autograph seekers.

Then came the day the balloting would be announced. Sims and the other candidates hid out until close to noon, then tried to avoid the press until they found out the outcome. The phone calls came from New York. Then came the press conference for Sims, who still had another year of college ball to play. By the time he was through answering all of the reporters at the conference, he was ready to take a vacation. But the phone calls continued when he went back to his dorm room. He finally took the phone off the hook.

He was paying the price.

There's the other side to the coin. Johnny Rodgers won his Heisman, and he, too, faced the tension and the commotion that accompanies the award now. But the Nebraska wingback sensation had felt the negative side of being a football hero long before that. He had crossed the line between right and wrong, just as so many young men and



Tom Osborne shows the strain of coaching from the sidelines

women do in high school and college. His "wrong" would have gone unnoticed in the press if he had been Johnny Rodgers the star engineering student. But he was Johnny Rodgers the football hero.

He paid the price.

Steve Davis, former Oklahoma quarterback, could do all the volunteer preaching he wanted his first two years in college. Not many people heard about it — or cared.

"Nobody cared what Steve Davis was doing my first two years at OU," said the young man who led the Sooners to two national championships and 32 wins and a tie in 34 starts. "I mean, who cared about a stubby little third or fourth-team quarterback? But all that changed after the season started in 1973."

That's when Davis became OU's starting quarterback. He began paying the price.

"I'd had pressure before," Davis continued. "I had it in high school. I had it my freshman year, and when I was a redshirt and thought about quitting school and going home. I had it in just going to Oklahoma. So I could handle all the pressure. The pressure you feel as the quarterback at Sallisaw High School is at least as great as that you feel at Oklahoma. The pressure you put on yourself, that is."

"But at Oklahoma there are so many people adding to the pressure. There are 75,000 people up there in the stands, and that does make a difference. You are thrust into a national limelight at OU, where it might be more of a regional nature at some colleges. Herschel Walker is a household

word across the nation. But that is pressure. Everything he does is being watched and reported on. To me, the pressure of a semifinal playoff game at Sallisaw against Nowata was just as great as that of a fourth-quarter showdown with Nebraska while I was at OU. But other people wouldn't let it be the same."

Most coaches are gradually led into the pressure of a job such as Osborne's or Barry Switzer's. But there are still plenty of surprises. No matter how many years they might serve as assistant coaches, they can't be fully prepared for what happens to their lives when they are "The Man."

"I had a pretty good idea about what was going to be involved," said Osborne, who has continued the great Nebraska tradition created by the retired Bob Devaney. "I guess the main difference is that you're a lot more visible, and it's a little difficult sometimes to go to a movie or go to a restaurant or somewhere and not have people come up and want to strike up a conversation."

The growing popularity of college football on television has made players and coaches frequent targets for fans — and critics. They get to the point where they feel they know all their favorites.

"In a way it's nice to be recognized," said Osborne. "And yet in a way it's difficult to have much privacy. During the season you're a little bit more of a lightning rod — when things don't go well, you get most of the blame. And when things do go well, you get most of the credit; probably, really a disproportionate amount of both, because

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THE FELLOWSHIP
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there are a lot of people involved in coaching, a lot of people involved in playing. And yet you tend to be the one people look to."

Davis and other OU quarterbacks (or quarterbacks almost anywhere, for that matter) can attest to that. Although he started only one losing game in three years for the Sooners (a 23-3 loss to Kansas in 1975, his senior season), Davis' mail delivery was never heavier than after that defeat.

But that is not that big a deal to Steve. He was hurt, but it was a momentary thing. The constant pressure of being a "celebrity" was the biggest hardship on him.

"I think that any young man who plays at Oklahoma has a tremendous responsibility," Davis explained. "This state doesn't have any major professional sports team, and the idols and heroes that our kids have are the college athletes."

"I had my heart broken when I was in junior high school. One night late after a football game my dad and I went to get a chocolate shake or something, and we went to the local drive-in where all the kids would hang out. And one of the top football players, a guy that I looked up to, was out there in back, leaning up against a fence, drinking a beer. And it broke my heart."

"That has always stuck with me. I don't ever want to do anything where a kid would see me in that type of situation and break his heart."

No matter how long you're on that pedestal, or how cold and professional you get, it's still tough to ignore some of the things that happen.

"I think the toughest part for me," offered Osborne, "are some of the things that happen in the press. Not so much in terms of the writers themselves, but letters from people that get published. You realize that people mean well, but they're generally uninformed. They just can't know that much about what goes into the game of football. And I guess it hurts a bit to get raked over publicly by people who don't know too much about what's going on in your business. You often reflect on how they would feel if you went into their business and told them what they were doing wrong."

"But overall it's been pretty good here. People have been good to me at Nebraska. And the press has been fair. After a while you have to get to the point where you disregard the negative things in the press, because if you paid attention to it, you'd be paralyzed — you wouldn't know which way to go. If you listened to everyone, it'd get to where you'd be afraid to do anything."

"But I don't think anyone gets immune to it. Not totally. No matter how tough-skinned you appear to be. It always hurts personally when you're being criticized in public. But you get to where you regard it as part of the job."

Oklahoma's Barry Switzer became a head coach the same year that Osborne took over at Nebraska (1973). And he, too, has had his ups and downs in the public media.

"You go through stages, to an extent," said Switzer. "I don't even think about it any more. I don't resent the loss of privacy, but I feel like a public company sometimes. I have my calendar completely filled up with speaking engagements for April and May. It's ridiculous. I don't even have any weekends. If I wanted to just go fishing or something, I don't think I could."

"As for the players, I think most react positively to the added responsibility. They accept it, respond to it and make themselves better persons for it. When they're thrown into that limelight, they have to learn to accept it and become better leaders and deal with the public."

When Oklahoma fans found out that Steve Davis could not only do the job as a wishbone quarterback, but could also shine as a public speaker, the word got around fast. And so did Davis.

"There is no privacy once you get to that point," he said of the three years he started at Norman. "It's a shame. People don't realize the unrealistic demands they put on a person who's trying to compete as an amateur athlete and at the same time get a college education. They just don't understand the sacrifices you have to make personally. I had very little personal time when I was in college."

"I would give up an evening of study, of a date, of anything — even sitting around wasting time watching tv — I would give up any of that to go speak to young people. But I do not regret one speaking engagement I had a chance to be a part of...not any of them. Each one of them meant something to me and to those who came and listened. What I do regret is having to deal with people who would make promises to you about providing transportation and things like that and then not come through."

"I might drive half the night getting to and from a speaking engagement and not get back to the dorm until just before the 11 o'clock bed check. Coach Switzer would very seldom realize that maybe I had been to Houston that night. Private jets coming into Norman to take me to speak somewhere and bring me back were commonplace. I remember one night I barely got in at 10:59, and Gene Hochevar was looking for me. He was from Colorado. So I come in and he says, 'Where you been?' And I say, 'Denver.' I'd flown to Denver and back and spoke to a group there and he didn't even know it!"

"You feel obligated to do that. I don't think I could have been a 4.0 student. And I don't know that it would have meant that much if I had. But I could have been close to that if it hadn't been for the demands on my time to speak around the country. But it's all worth it when I get a letter or talk to a mom or a dad who says I said something that helped turn their kid's life around at a critical time. I wouldn't trade that for anything in the world."

One of the prices coaches pay that is seldom thought about by the public is that paid by their families. Not only do the wives and children of a coach have to sacrifice nights and weekends with the man of the house, but they have to listen to the opinions of others about how that man is doing his coaching job.

"It's been a little better than I expected," said Osborne of that aspect. "When I first became head coach, my children were in grade school. Now my son's in high school, I have a daughter in junior high and one about to leave grade school. And those are the areas where kids and people can sometimes be brutally frank."

"We talk to our players about the demands that are going to be made on them. We feel like there is no such thing as a privilege without responsibility, and that they are in a position of some privilege because some people do look up to them. They are visible figures, and in return they have responsibilities to the public in regard to their conduct and the way they deal with the public." ●

Pettibone Wishes Timing Had Been Better On Move

Former OU, NU recruiting chief feels Sooners, Huskers made giant recruiting hauls in 1982.

By Al Eschbach

If there was an election in Lincoln, Neb., Jan. 20, Jerry Pettibone would have had an excellent chance of gaining some kind of office. Successful recruiting coordinators at Nebraska somehow have a way of winning a lot of support.

Now, if there was an election Jan. 22, forget it. Fidel Castro would have gotten more votes. Jerry Pettibone had committed a bigger sin than Benedict Arnold — he left the Huskers less than three weeks before the most important day of the year — national signing date.

And like Arnold, Pettibone was labeled a traitor by Husker faithfuls. Even nice guy Tom Osborne became very upset. Osborne just couldn't understand why his recruiting coordinator would skip town without even telling him. His feelings were hurt. But what the Nebraska staff was really worried about were the recruiting efforts. Pettibone was directing the program to one of its best efforts since the days of Bob Devaney.

Jerry Pettibone is a man of character. He doesn't hang out in bars at night. He's a family man. And to the program he's working for, he's extremely faithful. He has an upbeat, optimistic tone, always.

Then why would he desert the Huskers in their moment of need? It really isn't that big of a mystery when you put the parts together. First of all, Jerry Pettibone wants to be a head coach some day. The move to Texas A&M was a step up the professional ladder as far as his position in a program. He's administrative assistant. "I guess I'm the man right under Jackie Sherrill, or I

think no further down the line than the second assistant as far as helping make decisions," he says.

Secondly, Pettibone is a Texas native. He has become one of the most respected recruiting coordinators in the land because of his knowledge of the Texas schoolboy super stars. So he would be more at home in the Lone Star state. Also, his wife Suzy would be closer to her family in Oklahoma. And the thought of a warmer climate was a factor.

Thirdly, there were financial benefits in heading to College Station. And it just wasn't a nickel or dime raise. So Pettibone was given a deal, that the Godfather would say, "you just can't refuse."

There were rumors that Pettibone was getting a new house as part of the deal. That was a false report. Currently he's living in an apartment in College Station while he awaits construction of his "dream house."

The enthusiasm is as sharp as ever. He'll talk to you until late at night about the upswing in the Aggie fortunes. Yes, Jerry Pettibone is an Aggie now and he doesn't think it's a bad joke. The only thing that can keep him from laughing is when he talks about those days in late January when he made that surprising decision. He's glad he made it, but he wishes maybe it could have been handled a little differently.

He recalls what happened.

"It was before the news ever came out that Texas A&M was publicly interested in Jackie Sherrill. I got a call from R.C. Slocum (former Texas A&M assistant who was then at Southern Cal). He told me there was a chance that Jackie Sherrill would be going to Texas A&M and

he wanted to build his staff with those who had Texas connections. He told me that Jackie wanted to know if I would be interested.

"I told R.C. that I would have to talk to Jackie. I just didn't want to make any kind of commitment then because I didn't know everything that was going on. I wasn't even thinking about leaving Nebraska for another job as an assistant. I had applied for the head coaching job at Utah earlier in the winter, but I didn't get it."

Then things happened in rapid fashion. Pettibone did some soul searching and came away with a new job.

"I guess it was Jan. 19 when Jackie Sherrill was named coach at Texas A&M. He gave me a call that day and asked me if I would be interested in joining his staff. He told me that he would like to have an opportunity to visit with me. I called Tom Osborne and asked him for permission. He said it would be okay, just as long as I talked to him before I made a final decision."

That's what eventually rubbed Osborne wrong and caused some initial ill feelings when Pettibone accepted the job without telling him.

"So on that Wednesday, I visited Texas A&M. I visited with the players. There were quite a few that I had already known when I recruited them when I was either at Oklahoma or Nebr. I looked over the facilities and visited Jackie for a long time. The next day went back to Lincoln. They had a private plane to get me back. I remember we stopped in Dallas and I tried to get in touch with Tom, but I couldn't."

That night Pettibone sat down with Suzy and tried to make a decision. Quickly, they both agreed the Texas

A&M offer should be accepted because it was a professional advancement. This is when the search for Tom Osborne intensified.

"He was in Minnesota recruiting. I called several times and left messages at the hotel he was staying. But I just couldn't get through to him. That bothered me."

It bothered Osborne, too. He found out Friday when Pettibone was already behind his Aggie desk.

"If I had to do it all over again, I would have waited that extra day before I made the move. That would have given me the chance to talk to Tom."

Pettibone admits Tom wasn't very happy with him when they talked that Friday.

"There were some bad feelings. I know he really wanted to talk before I made the final decision. I could understand his feelings. We had become very close. I respect the man very much. He's one of the big reasons why I went to Nebraska in the first place."

There were also some very unfriendly fan letters that were received. "But I really think most of the ones I got were positive and all that they did was wish me a lot of luck. I understand why some of the fans were upset. I just couldn't stay if I was going to be the recruiting coordinator at Texas A&M. I had to leave then."

Pettibone thinks this Aggie staff reminds him quite a bit of the Oklahoma staff he was part of in 1973

when Barry Switzer took over for Chuck Fairbanks.

"We have a lot of young guys who are very close on and off the field. That's the way it was at Oklahoma. I would say Jackie is a lot like Barry. They both have very outgoing type personalities. And they're both very impressive when they go into a house of a recruit. They work hard in that department."

There could be a certain Sherrill-Switzer connection.

"I would say there will be times when we will help each other out in recruiting," Jerry laughed. "We are in the same conference as Texas and the Texas game is one of the biggest for OU. So you could see we both have some common ties which may cause us to be very sympathetic to their cause (and vice-versa)."

As the weeks passed that Feb. 10 national signing date, the furor caused by Pettibone in Lincoln began to subside. It was a Tom and Jerry dinner engagement which helped clear all of the air.

"I think we're on very good terms now," Pettibone said of Osborne. "I think Tom realizes why I left and why I made the decision. What I didn't want to happen when I made my decision to go to Texas A&M was to force Tom to start matching what they were giving me. I'm sure I would have gotten more if I stayed at Nebraska, but in all honesty, money wasn't the big thing why I left. I didn't want to put Tom into a

position where he had to offer me more to stay."

The greatest fear among Husker supporters when Pettibone bolted town was this year's recruiting efforts. They could envision all that hard work going down the drain. Jerry had been in charge of recruiting Tulsa All-American running back Spencer Tillman. But he also was after a talented Texas group, which included running back Anthony Byerly. As it turned out, the Huskers may have had their great recruiting success under Osborne.

The defection of Pettibone did hurt in Texas. The Huskers may have wound up with both running back Sonny Harmon and split end Jeff Bolton. When Jerry moved South, Bolton and Harmon also became Aggies.

"I had an agreement with Tom that I wouldn't recruit those players that I had been recruiting for Nebraska. In fact, after I moved I got a call from Anthony Byerly. He asked me if he should still consider visiting Nebraska. He was thinking about cancelling. I told him that he should give it a chance and that he would like it. I tried to help them when I could. I think we would have gotten a couple of players from Texas if I stayed at Nebraska. But my moving didn't hurt them too much because I notice that most of the national recruiting services rank them very high.

"This was the best year in Nebraska in quite some time. I thought there were three franchise players — Stan Parker

Top 20 Recruiting Classes

Blue Chips

1. Georgia
2. Notre Dame
3. Michigan
4. Oklahoma
5. North Carolina
6. Texas
7. USC
8. Arizona State
9. LSU
10. Penn State
11. Pittsburgh
12. Ohio State
13. Florida
14. Houston
15. Nebraska
16. Texas A&M
16. Illinois
16. Alabama
16. Tennessee
16. Kansas

Joe Terranova

1. Georgia
2. Notre Dame
3. Texas
4. Oklahoma
5. Nebraska
6. North Carolina
7. Auburn
8. Florida
9. Penn State
10. Illinois
11. Arizona State
12. USC
13. Pittsburgh
14. Michigan
15. Alabama
16. Ohio State
17. Tennessee
18. Clemson
19. Kansas
20. Purdue

M&S

1. Notre Dame
2. Georgia
3. Ohio State
4. Oklahoma
5. Michigan
6. North Carolina
7. LSU
8. Texas
9. Penn State
10. Alabama
11. Pittsburgh
12. USC
13. Arizona
14. Purdue
15. Houston
16. UCLA
17. Florida State
18. Illinois
19. Florida
20. Nebraska

Southwest High School

1. Notre Dame
2. Georgia (tie)
2. Texas
4. Penn State
5. USC
6. Oklahoma (tie)
6. North Carolina
8. Arizona State
9. Kansas
10. Michigan
11. Nebraska
12. Illinois (tie)
12. UCLA
14. SMU
15. Texas
16. TCU
17. LSU
18. West Virginia
19. Alabama
20. Florida-Missouri (tie)

(tight end), Pernell Gatson (quarterback) and Larry Station (linebacker). They got Parker and Gatson and that was a good start. Then they got all of the other players in Nebraska they were after.

"And I think players like Brad Tyrer (linebacker from Kansas City), Chris Spachman (defensive lineman from Kansas City) and Bob Bowen (a tight end from Westside, Neb.), Jimmy Drayton (defensive back from Elizabeth, N.J.) and Lawrence Hart (offensive tackle from Cottage Grove Park, Minn.) all have chances to be supers before they're finished in college."

Pettibone was also impressed with the Oklahoma recruiting year. He lauds the ability of Spencer Tillman.

"Spencer Tillman was the best running back that I saw in person this year. He will be a great, great player. I have to rate him above Jimmy Hawkins (Texas A&M) and Anthony Byerly (Texas). He has great natural instincts. And when I got to A&M I saw a film of Marcus Dupree. He's going to be a super because of the size and speed he has.

"And James Lee can be as good as he wants to be. He's an incredible athlete. I thought OU got some very good players from Texas. Earl Johnson (Dallas) is a fine running back and so is Matt Pierson (Terrell). Both were underrated. I didn't get to see LaDorphyas Stripling play (offensive lineman from Tyler),

but everything I have heard has been good. And I know Evan Gatewood (linebacker from Lake Highlands) is a good one because I recruited him at Nebraska."

Byerly got much of the attention in Texas last year, but Pettibone thinks Hawkins, a 6-foot, 190 pounder from San Antonio could be better.

"Byerly is bigger and stronger, but Hawkins has better speed and better moves. We think he can help us right away. He's a quality player. We're going to be doing things a little differently at Texas A&M. Everything is going to be above board. We are going to try to eliminate the alums from recruiting as much as we can because I think that's where there has been trouble before and that's why there's been allegations of cheating. Jackie Sherrill firmly believes in having the coaches do the recruiting, not the alumni."

Jerry Pettibone seems to be quite content at Texas A&M. He says he wants to stay there for a long time — or at least until that elusive head coaching job becomes available.

Most of the recruiting services have come out with their recruiting ratings. And as usual, they differ considerably.

Joe Terranova from Detroit ranks the top 10 recruiting classes as: 1, Georgia; 2, Notre Dame; 3, Texas; 4, Oklahoma; 5, Nebraska; 6, North Carolina; 7, Auburn; 8, Florida; 9, Penn State and 10, Illinois.

Blue Chips Magazine ranks: 1,

Georgia; 2, Notre Dame; 3, Michigan; 4, Oklahoma; 5, North Carolina; 6, Texas; 7, USC; 8, Arizona State; 9, LSU and 10, Penn State. Nebraska is 15th.

M&S from Warwick, Rhode Island lists: 1, Notre Dame; 2, Georgia; 3, Ohio State; 4, Oklahoma; 5, Michigan; 6, North Carolina; 7, LSU; 8, Texas; 9, Penn State and 10, Alabama. Nebraska is No. 20.

And Southwest High School from Houston tabs: 1, Notre Dame; 2, Georgia-Texas; 4, Penn State; 5, USC; 6, Oklahoma-North Carolina; 8, Arizona State; 9, Kansas and Michigan 10. Nebraska follows in the 11th slot.

Blue Chips tabs Marcus Dupree as the top running back. Spencer Tillman is the No. 3 halfback. James Lee is the top defensive end. LaDorphyas Stripling is on the third team Super Blues. *Blue Chips* rates Nebraska's Stan Parker as a third-teamer at defensive end, wingback Doug Dubose as a sixth team wide receiver and Chris Spachman as a sixth team defensive lineman.

Terranova lists four Oklahoma recruits in his "Nifty 50" — Lee, Dupree, Tillman and Stripling. M&S tabs Dupree the No. 1 running back and Tillman No. 6. It has Lee listed as the fourth best line prize. The lone Nebraska recruit is Stan Parker, ranked 16th among the linemen. Southwest High School says Dupree is the No. 1 power runner, Tillman the No. 8 speed runner and Lee the top defensive end.

Blue Chips

OFFENSE: TE — Arnold Franklin, North Carolina; James McKinney, Texas.

OL — Jim Fitzpatrick, USC; Jim McCullough, UCLA; OL — Bob Maggs, Ohio State; Jay Floyd, Georgia; OL — Bruce Parks, USC; Mike Perrino, Notre Dame; OL — John Hand, Alabama; Gene Chilton, Texas; OL — John Askins, Notre Dame; Mike Hammerstein, Michigan.

WR — Hasson Jones, Florida State; Milt Jackson, Notre Dame.

QB — Tony Robinson, Tennessee; Jamie Harris, Georgia.

HB — Marcus Dupree, Oklahoma; Matt Stennett, Pittsburgh; HB — John Williams, Florida; Gary James, LSU.

FB — Keith Byers, Ohio State; Spencer Tillman, Oklahoma.

K — Hal Von Wyl, Notre Dame; Pat Moons, Michigan.

DEFENSE: DE — James Lee, Oklahoma; Ron Brown, USC; DE — Jim Juriga, Illinois; Wes Neighbors, Alabama; DE — Ivan Hicks, Michigan; Demise Williams, Oklahoma State.

DL — T. J. Turner, Houston; Roland Barbay, LSU; DL — Gerald Browner, Georgia; Derek Wimberly, Purdue.

LB — Tony Furjanic, Notre Dame; Carl Carr, North Carolina; LB — Kennedy Pola, USC; Larry Station, Iowa; Rick DiBernardo, Notre Dame; LB — Ty Allert, Texas; Ed Allen, Arizona State.

DB — Darrell Reese, SMU; John Kontz, West Virginia; DB — Egypt Allen, TCU; Lonnie White, USC; DB — Dwayne Pugh, Illinois.

M&S Top 40

QB — Tony Robinson, Tennessee; Todd Lezon, Notre Dame; Rich Bowen, Pittsburgh; Jamie Harris, Georgia; Jim Plum, San Diego State.

RB — Marcus Dupree, Oklahoma; Gary James, LSU; John Williams, Florida; Anthony Byerly, Texas; Keith Byers, Ohio State; Spencer Tillman, Oklahoma; Jimmy Hawkins, Texas A&M; George Smith, Georgia; Alan Pinkett, Notre Dame.

Receivers-TE — Hassen Jones, Florida State; Milt Jackson, Notre Dame; Herman Archie, Georgia; Preston Gray, Michigan State; Gilvanni Johnson, Michigan; Jeff Bolton, Texas A&M; Albert Bell, Purdue; Glen Dennard, Arizona State; Arnold Franklin, North Carolina.

Linemen — Jim Fitzpatrick, USC; Gerald Browner, Georgia; T. J. Turner, Houston; James Lee, Oklahoma; Bob Maggs, Ohio State; John Hand, Alabama; Derek Wimberly, Purdue.

Linebackers — Tony Furjanic, Notre Dame; Rick DiBernardo, Notre Dame; Ty Allert, Texas; Wes Neighbors, Alabama; Gerald Taylor, TCU; Carl Carr, North Carolina; Kennedy Pola, USC.

DB — Tony Berry, Kansas; Egypt Allen,

TCU; Ivan Hicks, Michigan.

Southwest High School

QB — Tony Robinson, Tennessee; Jim Plum, San Diego State; Jamie Harris, Georgia.

Power Runners — Marcus Dupree, Oklahoma; Vincent Jackson, Auburn; Anthony Byerly, Texas.

Speed Runners — John Williams, Florida; Gary James, LSU; Keith Montgomery, Georgia.

Ends — Hassen Jones, Florida State; Preston Gray, Michigan State; Milt Jackson, Notre Dame.

TE — Arnold Franklin, North Carolina; Mitch Andrews, LSU; Jeff Parks, Auburn.

Center — Bob Maggs, Ohio State; Rob Maggard, Nebraska; Todd Parks, Texas.

OL — Jim Fitzpatrick, USC; John Hand, Alabama; John Askin, Notre Dame.

DE — James Lee, Oklahoma; Kip Cooper, Texas; Jim Juriga, Illinois.

DT — T. J. Turner, Houston; Jeff Bregel, USC; Dennis Barron, North Carolina.

NG — Gerald Browner, Georgia; Victor Perry, Georgia; Gerald Taylor, TCU.

LB — Rick DiBernardo, Notre Dame; Darnell Williams, Kansas; Larry Station,

DB — Egypt Allen, TCU; Tony Berry, Kansas; Ivan Hicks, Michigan.

High Water Mark in Big 8 First Turn in Great Race

Six Golds by Looschen and four by Weires pace conference dominance, but NCAA is still "a longer row to hoe."

By Randy York

Nebraska's semi-disappointing performance in the NCAA Swimming and Diving Championships in Milwaukee, Cal Bentz said, "was like missing a turn. The race isn't over. We're going to have to make some adjustments and we may scramble a little bit. But we're not going to quit the race."

Bentz could call it The Great Race — his obsession to take Cornhusker swimming beyond the Big Eight Conference, which they now dominate, and into the national spotlight, which they seek so desperately.

After winning its third consecutive conference meet by a whopping 150 points in early March, Nebraska scored only four points in the NCAA. The Huskers finished 30th, 15 places lower than Bentz envisioned. He was disappointed, but not disillusioned.

"Too many good things have happened this year for us to let four points in the NCAA put our season in a negative light," Bentz said. Although the Huskers didn't complete their mission, they took one giant leap forward.

"We gained attention at a different level," Bentz said. "The step we took

was like the step we took when we moved from the bottom of the Big Eight to fourth in 1979. We gained some respect. We haven't arrived at where we want to be, but we're well on our way to getting there."

Bentz need not look far for cue cards. Cal-Berkeley, the fourth-place finisher in this year's NCAA, lost to Nebraska in a dual meet in mid-January. So did Big Ten Conference champion Iowa. The Huskers also whipped national independent champion Southern Illinois, the 13th-place finisher in the NCAA.

Because of those impressive scalps, Bentz received a letter from the National Swimming Coaches Association before the NCAA meet in late-March. A coaches' poll had selected the

Huskers to finish 15th in Milwaukee.

Bentz, who inherited a drowning program that had finished last in the conference for seven consecutive years, was honored. But he was not surprised.

"Top 15 was a realistic goal," he said. "Even though we didn't meet it, that thought really came home to me during the meet. I saw some things that showed me we were on track — that we weren't shooting in the dark or we weren't looking at blue sky. We didn't make it, but I can honestly say we're not shooting from the hip."

Bentz, who gets most of the credit for Nebraska swimming's rags-to-riches success story, accepts most of the blame for not living up to expectations in the NCAA.



All-American Cliff Looschen takes hat off to the Huskers.

"We put a great deal of emphasis on the Big Eight championship," he said. "To be truthful, we put more emphasis on it than we should. This is just my feeling. I can't guarantee it as a fact. But it was my impression that we were a little flat in the NCAA. Quite a few of our people weren't even making their seed times."

For Bentz, a master at peaking his performers at the most opportune times, the letdown was uncharacteristic. There was also a psychological factor working against the Huskers. Tim Boyd, a key man on NU's three NCAA-qualifying relay teams, suffered a wrist injury and was unable to work out until shortly before the national meet. "I don't like excuses," Bentz said. "But not knowing his status affected our team."

Bentz thought all three relay teams might score. Although none did, the 400 medley relay improved its time from 3:21.87 to 3:21.00 to finish 17th.

Nebraska's four points were scored by freshman record-setter Cliff

Looschen, who finished ninth in the 100 backstroke. Looschen had qualified seventh with a :50.18. His clocking in the finals was :50.44. Bentz figures if Looschen could have matched his :49.88 medley relay leadoff leg in the individual finals, he could have finished in the top six.

The ninth-place effort still made Looschen Nebraska's first All-American swimmer since Keefe Ludwig earned that status 16 years ago. The performance also quadrupled Nebraska's one-point total in last year's NCAA meet when diver Dave Keane finished 12th.

Looschen ranks as the most celebrated recruit in Nebraska swimming history. The Cocoa Beach, Fla., product set a national junior record in the 200 backstroke and was the star of the Florida state high school swimming meet for two years. The prep All-American narrowed his scholarship choices to Nebraska, Indiana, Florida and Arizona State.

Despite the distance, Nebraska had the recruiting edge all along. Looschen's father, George Sr., is an electrical engineer with the U.S. space program. He's a Hooper native and an NU graduate. So is Cliff's mother, Sandra. Cliff was born in Omaha and the family moved to Cocoa Beach two weeks later. About 25 Looschen relatives still live in the Hooper-Fremont area. Older brother George Looschen Jr., swam for Bentz at Nebraska. Another brother, Scott, is a junior at Nebraska.

The Looschens made the Big Eight meet a family affair. While they packed themselves among a crowd of 1,000 at the Bob Devaney Sports Center Pool, Looschen made a cakewalk of the meet's outstanding swimmer award. He won six gold medals — the 50 freestyle, the 100 backstroke, the 200 backstroke and was a member of all three winning relay teams. All six golds were record-setting performances.

Junior Kevin Weires earned four conference gold medals, winning the 100 and 200 freestyles and swimming a leg on both triumphant freestyle relay teams. Matt Rye also won a gold medal for the Huskers in the 200 breaststroke. His time of 2:03.26 set a Big Eight record and qualified him for the NCAA.

After Missouri's Steve Braun upset Nebraska's diving contingent in the one-meter competition, the Corn-

huskers swept to the top four places in the three-meter competition. Fifth-year senior Lance Green won it. Teammates Reynaldo Castro, Dave Goodwin and Scott Hinrichs occupied the next three spots.

Castro and Goodwin qualified for the NCAA on the three-meter board, but did not place. Castro and Hinrichs suffered the same fate in the NCAA one-meter competition. Castro was 18th entering the final round of dives, but missed the last dive to finish 24th. Hinrichs finished 29th.

Despite its 15th-place finish, NU's 400 medley relay set a school record at the NCAA. Looschen combined with Rye, Earl Welliver and Weires for the mark.

In the three-meter competition, Castro and Goodwin failed to qualify for the semifinals. Looschen, Weires, Welliver and Boyd combined for a school record in the 800 freestyle relay despite finishing 17th.

Looschen finished 25th in the 200 backstroke. Rick Gilbertson was 28th and Rye 35th in the 200 breaststroke. The Huskers' 400 free relay team of Weires, Jim Korff, Looschen and Boyd finished 16th.

Reality forced Bentz to accentuate the positive. Even though the four points were considerably short of what he anticipated, it was still the Huskers' highest NCAA swimming production in 16 years.

Bentz sees the light at the end of the tunnel. "The points were spread out a lot more in the NCAA this year," he observed. "That's encouraging. A small windfall of points can move you past a lot of teams in a hurry."

Nebraska's fourth-year swimming coach saw signs that he wasn't the only one to over-emphasize the conference championship. Florida and Alabama, the top two swimming teams in the Southeastern Conference, produced the top two 500 free-style relay times in the SEC meet. Both swam two seconds slower at the NCAA and were beaten.

"The time standards are so tough, you pull out all the stops just to qualify," Bentz said. "That's what we did in the Big Eight. We were flat, almost on purpose, the first day. And we only had a 7½-point lead over Iowa State. So we geared up the second day and added 64 points onto our lead. In the future, we're going to have to curtail our psychological excitement."

The mission, Bentz said, is to create a



Dave Goodwin twists his way through a three-meter dive en route to a third-place finish in the Big Eight meet

timetable. "I've talked to Bob Fehrs," Bentz said of Nebraska's wrestling coach, who leapfrogged the Huskers into sixth place at the 1982 NCAA meet.

"We've got different problems," Bentz said. "When they made their move in the conference, they also made their move nationally because the Big Eight is, without question, the strongest wrestling conference in the country."

It's not that way in swimming. In fact, the Big Eight is one of the nation's weakest conferences in swimming. "Initially, my job was a lot easier than Bob's job," Bentz said. "We moved right to the front of the pack and accepted the leadership role. Now, we've got to set the standard for our conference to do anything nationally. We've got a longer row to hoe. The only point the Big Eight scored at last year's nationals was our point. The only four points the conference scored this year were our points."

No one needs to tell Bentz how competitive collegiate swimming is, or how quickly fortunes can change. When he accepted the Nebraska job, Tennessee

won the 1978 NCAA championship. A few weeks ago, the Volunteers scored five points to tie Wisconsin for 28th place, one notch ahead of Nebraska.

Bentz does not mind setting new standards for the Big Eight in swimming. "It's not a complaint. It's just a fact of life," he said. "We are not satisfied by just winning the conference. Our goal is some national recognition for Nebraska."

To meet that goal, Bentz said he must recruit more swimmers the caliber of Looschen, an athlete who is just now starting to come into his own. Bentz believes Looschen will someday be an NCAA individual champion.

Six years ago, Looschen was one of the most average Florida age-group swimmers Bentz could imagine.

"When I was 12, people would just kill me," Looschen recalled. "Now, they're not around. I have to thank my father for not letting me burn out when I was younger. Even when I was 15 and 16, he wouldn't let me swim all over the nation like the other kids were doing."

"He told me to enjoy high school

swimming and save all the hard work for college," Looschen said. "That's what I did. Last year, there were a lot of times I'd work out for 15 minutes, then go play basketball with my friends."

Now, Looschen trains year-round and is trying to increase his upper body strength through Nebraska's nationally known weight program. "If I work as hard next year as I worked this year, a lot better things will happen for me," he said.

Meanwhile, Bentz is scouring the country for more swimmers like Looschen, who shunned the more reputable powers to compete in one of the nation's finest facilities and contribute to one of the nation's fastest growing swimming programs.

Bentz said he's lost one recruit in Colorado. But he is still hopeful of signing recruits in California, Washington, Minnesota and Ohio, in addition to recruits in Nebraska, Missouri, Kansas and Oklahoma.

"This year was not the end of the contest," Bentz said. "Actually, we've only just begun." ●



Reynaldo Castro hits one of the dives which helped earn him second place in the Big Eight off the three meter board

Selmon Pioneered Huskers' Mat Resurgence

*Nebraska wrestling has
come a long way — thanks
to Johnnie.*

Johnnie Selmon was philosophical in his disappointment.

He had desperately longed for an NCAA wrestling championship. It was not wishful thinking; Selmon was as legitimate as any contender in the field. But he was denied two straight years, once by a few ounces and once by 142 pounds of Sooner.

"I never won the nationals," Selmon said after completing a glittering Cornhusker career in the NCAA tournament in Ames, Iowa. "I guess it just wasn't meant to be.

"But there's always something you want that you can't get. That's life. A lot of guys have told me they'd give anything for a Big Eight championship. I'd like to give one of mine away for a national championship."

Selmon continued:

"I won the nationals in junior college and made my junior college hall of fame. I made my high school hall of fame. I guess I'll be remembered at Nebraska, too."

Indeed.

Selmon will be remembered as a pioneer whose efforts were largely responsible for leading Nebraska out of the Big Eight wrestling wasteland. During his redshirt season in 1980, the Huskers finished sixth in the Big Eight. In two years under his captaincy they jumped to sixth in the nation.

Selmon was the first Nebraska wrestler in 19 years to earn a Big Eight championship when he swiped the 134-pound crown in 1981. He added the 142-pound title this year. He was named the outstanding wrestler in the Big Eight



Pioneer Johnnie Selmon,
pioneered moves that led
the Huskers out of the
Big Eight wasteland



Jim Scherr



Al Freeman



Gary Albright



Bill Scherr

tournament both years.

In a conference long dominated by the Oklahomas and Iowa State, the outstanding wrestler representing Nebraska was akin to a Heisman Trophy winner from Northwestern. The skinny kid was starting to kick sand back in the bully's face.

In 1981, Nebraska improved from 32nd to sixth in the NCAA tournament, which was the Huskers' loftiest perch in history.

"In the minds of the coaches and people familiar with our program, Johnnie will be remembered as the guy who *made* Nebraska wrestling," Bob Fehrs, the fourth-year Husker coach said. "I'm sure there are some old-timers who will differ with that, but in the modern era, he's been the key ingredient."

The other primary ingredients in the unprecedented NCAA finish were All-Americans Bill Scherr, fourth at 190 pounds; Scherr's twin brother Jim, sixth at 177, and heavyweight Gary Albright, seventh.

Fehrs was rewarded for the resurgence with his second straight Big Eight coach-of-the-year award.

Fehrs was just launching his program when he dispatched assistant Tim McDonald to Worthington, Minn., to scout the junior college national championships in 1979. "Tim came back and said Emil Capara (Grand Rapids, Mich., J.C. coach) had this kid who was throwing everybody all over. He wasn't sure he could do it at this level, but he thought we'd better check into him a little further," Fehrs said.

Fehrs knew Capara from Fehrs' coaching days at Muskegon, Mich. He called his old friend and found out that Selmon, who won his weight class, and his brother Billy, who finished fourth in his, came from a family of eight brothers and one sister in Mansfield,

Ohio. Billy was two years older and had waited for Johnnie so they could enroll together at Grand Rapids.

Billy wrestled at 150 pounds for Nebraska. The Selmons were Fehrs' only seniors.

"We recruited Johnnie primarily, but we thought Billy was capable of helping us get our program going. He did, definitely. But everybody realized he wasn't as tough as Johnnie," Fehrs said.

The brothers have always avoided each other in competition. "He couldn't accept losing to me, and I couldn't accept losing to him," Johnnie said.

Johnnie was recruited by a dozen major colleges after his J.C. career ended. Nebraska sold him on the opportunity to build a winner.

"I came to the place where I felt I could do the best and contribute the most," he said. "If I'd gone to Iowa State I'd only have been one of a million Big Eight champs they've had. At Nebraska, I'm a part of wrestling history."

"I've always wanted to build a program. I feel responsible for helping. I contributed as much as I could. When I won the Big Eight and outstanding wrestler trophies, people all over the country heard of me...and Nebraska. I could hear people whispering, 'Nebraska has come a long way.'"

The Selmons were redshirted in their first year as Huskers. Johnnie made his splash in 1980-81 with a 29-3-1 record. He avenged two of the losses by beating Thomas Landrum of Oklahoma State and Jim Gibbons of Iowa State in Big Eight meet.

His most glorious moment, however, came in this year's conference championships in Lincoln. It came down to Selmon, the holdover outstanding wrestler, and Andre Metzger of

Oklahoma, the defending national champion, No. 1 ranked in the U.S. and runner-up in the World Championships.

"You've got to beat somebody tough to gain respect," Selmon said. "Metzger is in the elite class."

The two were no strangers. When Selmon was in junior college and Metzger was a Sooner freshman, Metzger would return to his home near Grand Rapids and they would work out together.

"We were pretty evenly matched, but we'd never been in a match situation," Selmon said. "Everybody wondered how it would come out. I did, too."

The anticipation was heightened when Selmon's mother, Louise, called. She and Purnell Cameron, Johnnie's high school idol who had wrestled five years ahead of him in Mansfield, were coming to Lincoln to watch.

"Purnell was really an inspiration to me. My mom had followed us through high school, but she could never watch us in a match. She'd cover her eyes with her hands when we wrestled. She had never seen me in college."

"And here I was wrestling the No. 1 guy in the country. There was no way I was going to lose," he said.

Selmon outpointed Metzger 15-11 in a classic showdown, scoring four points with a takedown and near fall in the last second of the opening period.

Selmon and Metzger hooked it up again in the NCAA semifinals in Ames, Metzger winning 3-1. Selmon was assessed a penalty point when he refused to quit trying for a takedown after time ran out.

The loss was so deflating that Selmon was the victim of a 45-second pin by Minnesota's Jim Martinez in the consolations.

"I felt so low; I felt I'd let the whole world down. I was moving slow. My

head was down. I just couldn't get going. This guy (Martinez) came out all fired up and jumped all over me," Selmon said.

"But this year in the nationals wasn't as bad as the year before because I gave it my all," he said.

The NCAA meet his junior season at Princeton is still a source of embarrassment. He was eliminated by the scale, one pound overweight after winning his first two matches. Ironically, the eventual champion was Iowa State's Gibbons, Selmon's victim in the Big Eight.

"They had a new rule that year. We weighed in at noon on Wednesday and had to make weight again Thursday night after we wrestled," he said.

"I went out Wednesday night with some guys who didn't have to worry much about making weight. I ate too much. The next morning I was 10 pounds over. I didn't think I'd put on that much.

"I was used to cutting weight. During the season, I'd have to drop 22 pounds during a week for a match. But I had to lose 10 pounds that day.

"In my first match, I got a quick pin and didn't sweat an ounce. I decisioned the second guy and then started working out. After I lost nine pounds, I don't know if I could have won the tournament anyway. It took me three days to recover.

"It was the worst I ever felt. It was all in my hands. You couldn't even explain it to anybody...how good food tastes. I gain six pounds just drinking water to satisfaction. Making it worse, my parents were coming out to Princeton. I had to call them and tell them I was overweight. How can you explain something like that?" he said.

"At least," he said, "I can say my mom never saw me lose in college."

Fehrs calls Selmon the Reggie Jackson of the mat, his Mr. October. When the going gets tough...

"He works reasonably well during the season, but he doesn't become intense until it's do-or-die time," Fehrs said. "Some people are very tough in practice, but when the pressure is on they throw in the sponge. With him, the more pressure the better he's going to do. If you have the choice, you like them this way. There are more of the other kind."

As a junior, Selmon lost early to Gibbons and Landrum. He eliminated

Gibbons 21-4 in the Big Eight while Landrum was upset by Khris Whelan of Missouri. Selmon took care of Whelan in 3:08 in the finals.

As a senior, Selmon lost early to UN-Omaha ace Ryan Kauffman, the Division 2 national champion and to a Syracuse wrestler who didn't make it to the nationals.

"I was six pounds overweight for Kauffman, and I had to run it off. The coaches didn't know. I was out of shape," Selmon said. "I don't purposely lose early, but it happens. I'm lacking something. I don't push it. The training is much different at the end of the year."

Next season, Selmon will be on hand pushing another crop of Husker wrestlers as a graduate assistant coach. "I'll work out with them and push them as much as I can. I want to be around when Nebraska beats them all.



Two fingers aloft in this case means two straight Outstanding Wrestler trophies in the Big Eight meet for Selmon

You can feel it coming," he said.

"Keeping the guys who have graduated around, that helps. That's the one thing Nebraska lacks, those old vets coming back to work out. Nebraska doesn't have the old vets, the national champions, like some of those other schools," he said.

Selmon's spot at 142 will be filled next year by co-Capt. Al Freeman, who was redshirted last season. Freeman, like the Scherrs and freshman Albright, is an All-American.

"I want to see the day Iowa (national champion) puts us on the schedule. They always thought they'd beat us too bad," Selmon said.

"I'll always be happy I came here. Everything worked out like Coach Fehrs said. I never won a national championship, but I learned to accept defeat and appreciate victories.

"I've been to a lot of places, and Nebraska has the best facilities in the country — for every sport. Wrestlers from all over the country come in here for the Great Plains, and they say this is the greatest wrestling room and dressing rooms in the country.

"All we lack is the name. And we're getting that," Selmon said.

Said Fehrs: "Johnnie Selmon sure didn't hurt." ●

Who Will The New Stars Be?

With basketball, wrestling and gymnastics all having exceptional seasons this past winter, Husker fans will be anxious to see just which high school blue chippers will be coming to Lincoln for even greater things in years to come.

In the next issue of *Huskers Illustrated* you'll find a complete wrap-up of winter sport recruiting, with pictures of the top signees and sketches on their accomplishments and honors.

There'll also be a round-up of Big Eight conference and national recruiting information in those sports. So don't miss the June-July edition.

Rozier

CONTINUED FROM 16

"We go to basketball games or track meets, and people will ask us how we keep from fighting each other. Why? We're on the same team.

"I hope Roger gets everything he can out of it — the Heisman Trophy, all-American. I'm behind him. I'll help him get them. My time will come up. I'll wait my turn. Nobody is going to play 11 games all by himself.

"I'm still young. I'm not going anywhere. Coach Osborne had to wait for his turn to move up, and he and Bob Devaney get along pretty well. My mom taught me patience."

Mrs. Rozier said, "Mike said that? Isn't that nice. We always emphasized patience and let somebody else blow your horn. You never succeed overnight."

Mike said, "I don't even think about the Heisman or all-American or even set individual goals. If I don't make

them, people would say, 'Send him back to Coffeyville.' So I just play. Whatever happens, happens."

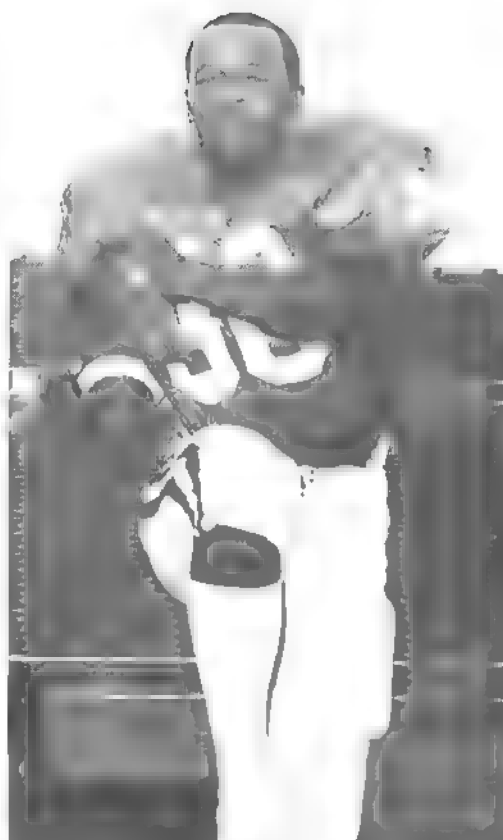
Craig is clearly the more gregarious of Nebraska's I-back twins. "I don't like a lot of attention. I just want to do what I do," Rozier said.

"Whenever I'm out with Roger, everybody knows who he is, and a lot of people don't know me. I tell him not to tell anybody," Rozier said.

So naturally, when Craig found himself surrounded by Brownie Scouts, signing autographs, at the state wrestling championships, he spotted Rozier at the other end of the gym and pointed the girls in his direction. The two shared the spotlight again.

Though he goes with the flow personally, Rozier is not without team goals. He was bitterly disappointed after the Orange Bowl loss and shunned the press. "The reporters were asking what went wrong. We gave our best. My goal is to go back there and win it.

"But I can't win it by myself. If it wasn't for those big guys in the line, I'd be nowhere," he said. ●



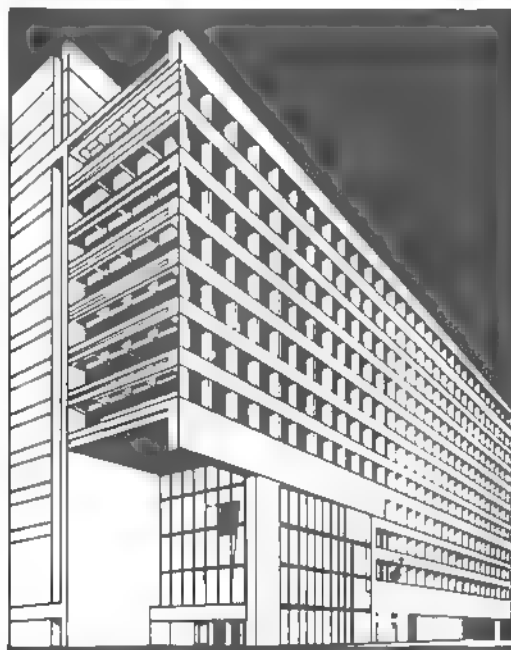
Mike Rozier

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Fumynori Takuwa (thrust) occupies his usual seat on the Husker basketball bench

Inside Husker Sports

The close of the Nebraska basketball season ended a six-month odyssey for a Japanese observer who warmed the Cornhusker bench during home games, made most trips with the team and spent so much time at practices that he came to be known as part of the staff.

Trouble was, Fumynori Takuwa — known less formally as Fumy — could speak virtually no English when he arrived and still did most of his communicating by notes and sign language when he departed in March.

"He could read and write much better than he could speak English," Head Coach Moe Iba said. "Randy Cipriano could talk to him better than anybody. Whenever I wanted to tell Fumy anything, I'd tell Randy and he'd tell him."

Assistant Coach Cipriano, son of the late Husker coach, Joe, said there was "a lot of sign language. I could get things across to him because I spent more time with him than anybody else." Besides, he said facetiously, "There are a lot of Japanese in Ogallala." Cipriano

coached at Ogallala High in the heart of cowboy country before joining the staff.

Takuwa, 41, is an assistant professor of physical education at Osaka Industrial University. Basketball is growing in popularity in Japan, and Fumy was sent to this country to study the organization, coaching techniques and relationships among coaches and players at a "major American university." A friend who graduated from the NU Medical School directed him to Lincoln

Fumy stayed with a Lincoln family, and whenever a major communications problem developed with the Huskers, the coaches sent for Japanese student Katz Shimomura, who had befriended the visitor.

"Fumy really made a lot of improvement in his English while he was here. He could understand most everything you wanted to get across by the time he left," Cipriano said. "I think he learned a lot."

The Husker baseball team opened the season by dropping a double-header to Nevada-Las Vegas and losing three of five games in a tournament in glitter city.

Assistant Coach Ron Johnette assessed the first time out this way: "We improved as we went along, which was not surprising. It was our first time outside, and it's hard to simulate game speed inside.

"One good thing, we got a lot of work on hitting the cutoff man and relays."

Which meant, of course, that the opposition was ripping a lot of base hits.

After the UNLV trip, John Sanders' troops went on a 10-game winning binge and swept to the title in a tourney in Edinburg, Tex.

How do you divide 7,500 by 21,000? You don't when the former is the number of tickets available for the NU-Hawaii football game in Honolulu this fall, and the latter is the number of requests for same.

"We're trying to get more," Ticket Manager Helen Ruth Wagner said. Meanwhile, she will wrestle with the problem of how to divvy them up.

When Nebraska last visited the islands for football, in 1976, there were plenty of tickets for the 15,000 junketeers.

But now the Rainbow Warriors are winning, and Aloha Stadium is nearly a full house every week. No question about it when the Huskers come calling.

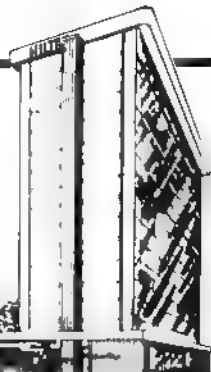
Meanwhile, Rudy Evers of Wauneta, Neb., is cooking up a Big Red Luau for those who make the excursion. Tickets will be no problem there. The target is 3,000.

Rudy lived in Hawaii for five years and traveled the islands for



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several years when his company based him in California. He is teaming up with Chuck Machado, reputedly Honolulu's top caterer, to throw the Husker wingding at Makaha, which is a beautiful 45-minute drive from the city.

Machado catered the Hilton Inn luau attended by many Nebraskans during the last visit.

"That's what got me thinking," Evers said. "Chuck said, 'Why not do it up right?'"

So they have reserved up to 50 buses for the trip out to the exclusive country club setting of the Makaha valley. It will be strictly a private Husker party-pep rally the night before the game, Dec. 3.

"This will be less commercialized than most luaus. It will be a lot more native. You're off by yourselves without the tremendous crowds of Waikiki. The standard luau price is \$31 to \$34. This one will be \$35, with part of the proceeds going to the Nebraska athletic department," Evers said.

For those not partial to Kaluah pig, sirloin strip steaks also will be on the menu. Most luaus run 2½-3 hours. Buses for the Husker luau will leave at 2:30 p.m. and return at 9:30.

For planning purposes, there will be no tickets sold in Hawaii. For reservations, Evers said, checks for \$35 should be made out to Big Red Pep Rally and Luau, P.O. Box 82442, Lincoln, Neb. 68501.

Husker pole vaulter Mark Newton, a former junior college transfer from California, was scheduled to complete his eligibility with the NCAA Indoor Championships. He tore a hamstring muscle on his last practice vault before he was set to leave, cancelling his trip to Detroit.

"It wasn't meant to be, I guess," said the holder of the school record at 17-6.

Further evidence that **Charlie Winkler's** book, *My Big Red Obsession*, is aptly named:

Nebraska had just whipped Iowa State at Memorial Stadium last fall to clinch a share of the Big Eight championship. The stadium was emptying out, and Charlie, who has been accorded Superfan status by

Sports Illustrated and other publications, was across the street at a table autographing copies of the book.

At the same time, he and many other Nebraskans had switched their radios to the Oklahoma-Missouri game in Columbia. The Tigers were hanging tough with a slim lead in the final minutes. An upset by Mizzou would mean Nebraska would lock up the outright championship and Orange Bowl before facing archrival OU a week later. Remember, Nebraska hadn't won one outright, without forfeits, in a decade.

Winkler, naturally, was getting excited. Up stepped Warren Alfson, a Husker Hall of Famer and guard on the 1940 team that played in the Rose Bowl, for his autograph.

Now Charlie knew Warren Alfson's name as well as he knew Johnny Rodgers or Dave Rimington. He started to personalize the written message on the flyleaf.

"I drew a blank on his first name under the excitement of the occasion," he said. "I was trying to listen to the game and wracking my brain. Is it Harold Alfson? Leonard? Allen? Finally, I said, 'How do you spell your first name?'"

"He said, 'W-A-R-R...' I felt like a fool. Finally, the girl who was helping me suggested that I wait until the game was over. I could have kissed her."

Especially after a Mizzou interception killed a late Sooner threat.

After a year's absence, Nebraska's women gymnasts returned to the Big Eight throne room, winning a fourth conference championship in five years. The Lady Huskers established a school record with 144.20 points in the regionals. Every individual record was broken.

Freshman Terri Furman set records in the all-around, beam and vault before dislocating an elbow on the first day of the conference meet. Soph Kim Grabowski set the uneven bars and floor ex marks.

In keeping with the surge in all Husker sports, a runner-up finish in the Big Eight meet by the Lady Huskers was the best ever. Sherri Hayward, a soph from Columbus, Ohio, won the Big Eight and finished sixth nationally in the 200 backstroke.

Jeff Carpenter, who finished his Husker linebacking career in 1977, ended a four-year Husker assistant coaching career this spring when he was named coach of the defensive ends and linebackers and recruiting coordinator at South Dakota U. in Vermillion. The boss is Dave Triplett, a former Iowa State aide.

The Nebraska baseball team has a new booster organization called the Home Run Club. Memberships are \$50, which are good for a season ticket, decal, bumper sticker, baseball newsletter, lapel pin and satisfaction from helping. Memberships are available at the baseball office, South Stadium, Lincoln, 68588.

Nebraska's wrestlers, who grabbed the attention with a sixth-place finish nationally, also led the Big Eight in Academic All-Big Eight selections with six — sophs Bill and Jim Scherr and Scott Morgan for the second time and newcomers Johnnie Selmon, Rory Cahoj and Gary Albright.

A fund drive raised a \$20,000 bonus for championship-winning Football Coach Tom Osborne. Assistants also were rewarded. Osborne promptly asked that \$4,000 of his share go to the Minority Scholarship Program, \$2,000 to the General Scholarship Fund and \$4,000 to the UNL Faculty Research Council.

Former Huskers **Jimmy Walden** and **Jimmy Burrow** have teamed up again. Walden coached Burrow at Amory, Miss., High School. Walden later coached at Nebraska, and Burrow played defensive back at NU before toiling six years in Canada. Walden, now head coach at Washington State, hired his old pupil as an assistant coach. ●



Ottey

CONTINUED FROM 31

through a friend while Sevigne was coaching at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.

"I ended up here, and so did Keith," Sevigne says now in a simple explanation of what has been a complex overseas recruiting network. In 1966, Sevigne was advisory coach for the Jamaican national team which competed at the Commonwealth Games in Kingston, Jamaica.

Many Jamaicans followed Gardner to Nebraska. The NU track and field record book is filled with their names. For instance, of 12 former Cornhuskers who have competed in track and field at the Olympic Games, eight have come from Jamaica, including Gardner, Forbes, Lynn Headley, Lennox Burgher, Horace Levy, Leighton Priestley and Garth Case.

Case is one of six NU track athletes to have been a three-time Big Eight indoor champion, winning the 600 in 1969, 1970 and 1971.

Ottey, who has added her name to the school record book with copy-machine regularity, fits well in the Jamaican tradition at Nebraska.

She says now the decision to come to Nebraska was not easy. Quarrie didn't want her to come. "A lot of Jamaicans didn't," she said. "They said, 'It's too cold; you'll just get pulled muscles.'"

Forbes, however, got the principal at Vere Technical to help convince Ottey that Nebraska wasn't so bad.

It was through the efforts of Forbes and Merlene's mother, Mrs. J. H. Bowen-Ottey, among others, that Merlene came to Nebraska after it appeared she might change her mind following the 1979 World Cup Trials in Montreal and enroll at Texas Women's University in Denton, Texas.

Carol Frost, then the NU women's track and field coach, flew to Montreal and spent three days trying to protect Nebraska's interest in Ottey, who was taken ill and could not compete in the Trials. The night before the finals, in the lobby of the Hotel Meridienne, "I asked Mrs. Frost if she still wanted me to come to Nebraska," Ottey said.

That question did not need to be repeated. Frost and Ottey left Mon-

treau for Lincoln, together.

Ottey was still uncertain about her decision to come to Nebraska, an uncertainty compounded by the loss of her father, who died of cancer while she was in Canada.

More than two weeks passed before she learned of his death.

It wasn't until near the end of her first semester "about Thanksgiving time," that Ottey finally decided she wouldn't pack up her bags and return to Jamaica.

"Often I said, 'Gee, I'm going home. I can't do this.'"

She was wrong.

Ottey has done many things for Nebraska's track and field program since then. Perhaps, too many. Heading into this season, she was ranked fourth in the world at 200 meters and eighth at 100 meters by the much respected *Track and Field News*.

Even so, Ottey was not among the 20 athletes receiving votes for the *Track and Field News* award as the 1981 Woman Athlete of the Year. According to Pepin, competing in collegiate seasons, both indoor and outdoor, hinders Ottey because such rankings depend a great deal on success

during the summer season in Europe. By the time an American collegian gets to Europe, "she's had it," Pepin said.

Ottey went to Europe last summer, and she won all but one of the half-dozen races in which she competed, including a victory over Canada's Angella Taylor in the 100 meters. "If they ran against each other 10 times, Merlene would win nine," said Pepin.

Taylor, however, was listed ahead of Ottey in the world 100-meter rankings.

Pepin says comparisons between Ottey and veteran runners like Evelyn Ashford, who won the *Track and Field News* outstanding athlete award, and Czechoslovakia's Jarmila Kratochilova, another top-ranked sprinter, are unfair anyway because "they've been around a long time," while Ottey has been competing only since 1978.

Much has happened in that time.

Ottey has gone from running barefoot on the grass to become one of the top sprinters in the world. In fact, says Pepin: "She may be finest all-around sprinter, from 60 to 400 meters in the world."

That's something Ottey would like to prove in the 1984 Olympic Games. ●

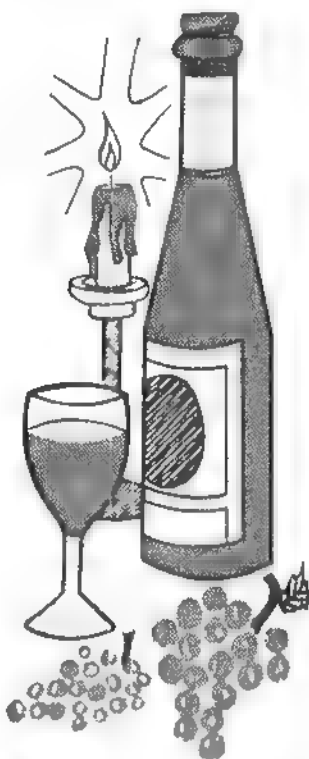
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New Recruiting Coordinator Assumes Labor of Love

Steve Pederson had a bright future at Ak-Sar-Ben; he had no coaching or recruiting experience; he was young. But when Osborne called, he answered.

Ursula Walsh, the Athletic Department's academic counselor, first suggested the idea. The more Tom Osborne, the football coach, thought about it, the more he liked it.

Steve Pederson was floored when Osborne asked if he would be interested. Certainly he was. Pederson talked it over with his wife, went out for a run to clear his head and eventually said, sure, why not?

The appointment of Pederson, 24, as football administrative assistant and recruiting coordinator in early March came as a surprise to most staffers. The move represented a departure from form, a change in philosophy.

The title Recruiting Coordinator had always been reserved for someone with coaching and recruiting experience. Pederson didn't even own a whistle. He had never had a flight canceled or found his reserved room filled while out chasing after high school athletes — all those things that make life interesting for recruiters. His exposure to the file room was only casual.

Nebraska's first recruiting coordinator, Rick Duval in 1973, was a linebacker coach before becoming strictly a recruiter. Jerry Pettibone, Pederson's predecessor, coached at Oklahoma and Southern Methodist before moving to Nebraska in 1979, but

he made his reputation as a high-powered Sooner recruiter.

After Pettibone left for Texas A&M, Osborne weighed about 30 applications. Most of the candidates had coaching and recruiting experience. Steve Pederson was not among them.

Pederson was comfortably settled as public relations director at Ak-Sar-Ben in Omaha. He had been on the job only 1½ years and had found the work enjoyable and fulfilling. His future at Ak obviously was bright. An Ak-Sar-Ben executive said, "He might have ended up running the place."

Pederson knew back at North Platte High that he was "headed in the direction of public relations." He was bitten by the Husker bug during 3½ years as a student assistant in the sports information office and six months as a full-time aide to Sports Information Director Don Bryant.

He also was a protege of Pettibone in the recruiting office, producing football recruiting brochures and other material. He helped out by leading tours of the facilities on recruiting weekends.

Much of his work with the football program was voluntary. He attracted attention with his enthusiasm, creativity and organizational ability.

During his years as a student assistant, Pederson "fell in love with the program. I know it sounds corny, but

when you go down on the field and the band is playing and the kids come out on the field, it's an unbelievable feeling. It's compelling," he said.

Even when he moved to Ak-Sar-Ben, Pederson couldn't stay completely divorced. He did volunteer work as a public address announcer during Husker track meets.

So when Osborne called, he was immediately interested. But it was no easy decision.

"I know it sounds easy, but Ak-Sar-Ben is a great place to work. It's a tremendous future. Moving would mean selling a home. Tami (Mrs. Pederson) has a lot of violin students she has to give up (she plays in the Omaha and Lincoln Symphonies)," Pederson said.

"But if I would sit down and think about what I wanted to do, this was it. As we talked, it all seemed to fit into place," he said.

Tom and Nancy Osborne stopped by the Pederson house to talk after watching their son Mike play basketball in Omaha. "That helped Tami. I made up my mind that afternoon...if she wanted to," Steve said.

"We'd gotten to know Steve from his working up here for the better part of two years," Osborne said. "Everybody was impressed with the fact that he's bright, well organized, creative and has a good feel for what we're doing."

Pederson's role, obviously, will be different. Pettibone was an experienced on-the-road recruiter. His Texas territory was assumed by Bob Thornton. Pederson will be strictly an on-campus coordinator.

"His No. 1 job is to identify players around the country and screen them. It involves more organizational and administrative ability than coaching ability. His job is partly P.R. and partly administration," Osborne said.

"Steve's weakness right now is evaluating players on film. But with Mike Corgan and the part-time coaches here, we have plenty of people to do that. Steve will do a good job and learn as he goes along, too," Osborne said.

Pederson gave up a solid position with a solid organization at Ak-Sar-Ben, "but at my age it's hard to think about the future. I want to work where I can do the best job, where it's exciting, where I can learn the most," he said.

"I learned a lot from Don Bryant, I learned a lot at Ak-Sar-Ben. I feel fortunate. I have worked for two of the



Steve Pederson

greatest organizations in the midwest. Nebraska's football program is about as stable as you're going to come across.

"It's not like a new coach coming in and one day it might not work out. Tom is as established as anybody in college football, and he's going to be here a long time. There are very few schools I'd be interested in, but Nebraska is a different situation.

"When it's your alma mater, too, it's easier to believe in. You don't have to lie to a kid to sell him. And I'm not sure there are many coaches I would want to work for, but Tom is one," Pederson said.

When Pederson was a student assistant, he hung around the recruiting office. "Jerry (Pettibone) and I talked an awful lot and came up with promotional ideas. We brainstormed things that eventually were put into action. My involvement with the football promotion eventually just happened.

"I loved the recruiting, all the brochures and printed material. We'd talk about the posters; what did we

want to say to the kids? What was most important to them?" he said.

Pederson's appointment reflects Osborne's emphasis on promotion.

"My job is to administer the recruiting program," Pederson said. "There are enough qualified coaches to evaluate film. When it's determined who to recruit, it's my job to make everything else perfect. And the feedback we're getting is that we have the best mailing program in the country.

"When a recruit gets **Huskers Illustrated** in the mail, he's really impressed. He says, 'This program is so big and so good, it has its own magazine.'

"So many of our recruits come a long way away, we have to put together a visual package so they can see what it's like here. A kid from Texas can't picture an indoor workout area. Our material shows the medical staff so parents can see we have three doctors and two physical therapists to take care of their son.

"And Boyd Epley's strength center is 50 paces ahead of everybody else's. Everybody else is copying what he did two years ago. Ursula Walsh is the same way. She's the forerunner in her field. She shoots square with the kids.

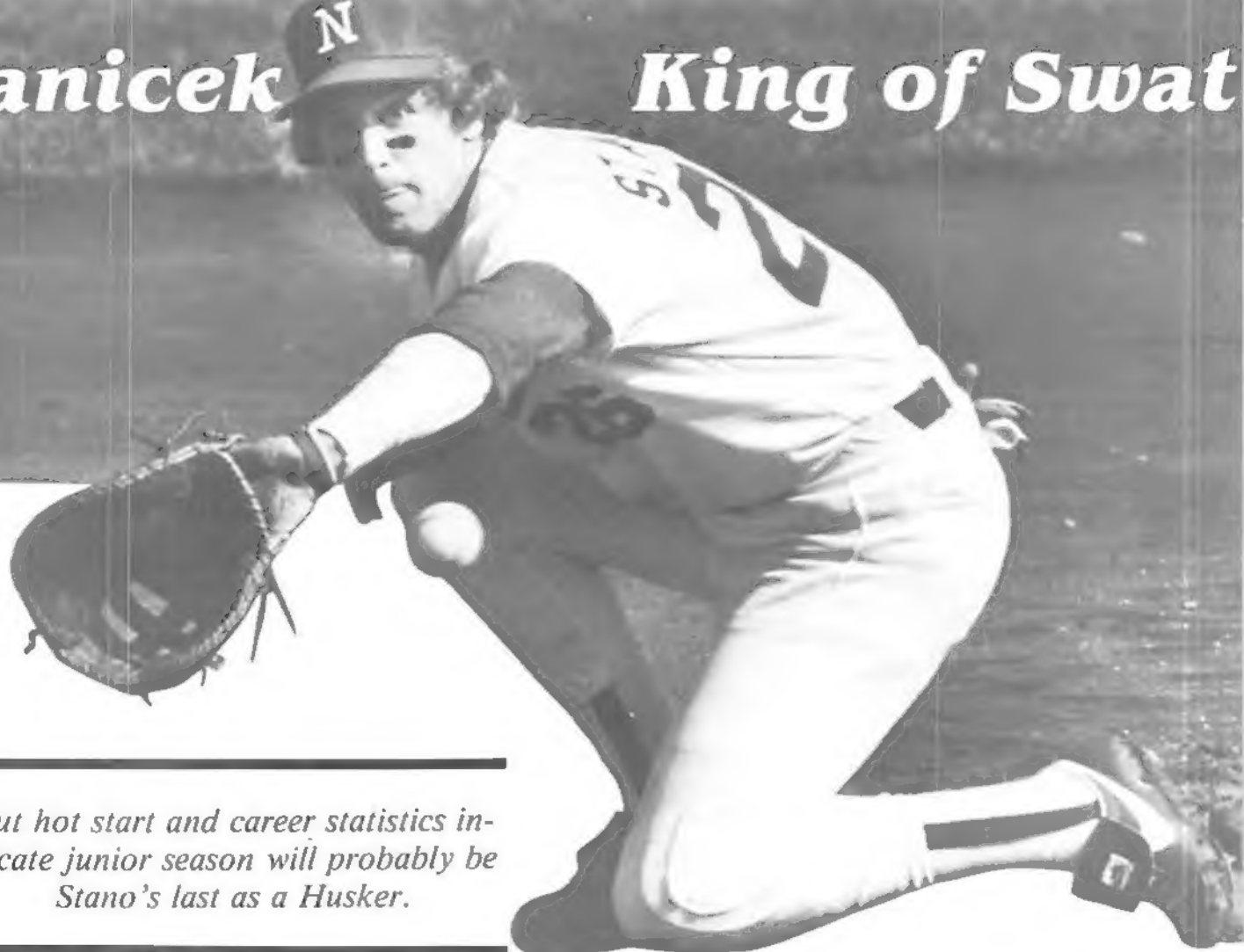
"So there are definite advantages you have here in recruiting."

It will not be Pederson's responsibility to make the ultimate decision on whether a player will be offered the opportunity to wear a Nebraska uniform. Nor was it Pettibone's decision, nor Duval's, nor any assistant coach's.

"Tom Osborne is the executive director of the football program," Pederson said. "I'll try to carry out his orders and philosophies the best I can, and I hope I can add some new things."

Despite his bottom-line authority, Osborne said the limited time and work volume during recruiting season demands a coordinator. "It used to be that we had until mid-May. It wasn't so concentrated. Now we have to locate the players and go get 'em. It's slam-bang," Osborne said.

Pederson said, "Recruiting is the key promotional thing we do. If a recruit receives a mailer every week like clockwork from the University of Nebraska, and they're all different, that tells the recruit that's the way the football program is run — organized, efficient, imaginative." ●



But hot start and career statistics indicate junior season will probably be Stano's last as a Husker.

By Mike Babcock

The ball left Steve Stanicek's aluminum bat with such force that you half expected to see a booster rocket break away as it climbed toward the left field fence at Buck Beltzer Field.

Oklahoma State outfielder Dale Rath, playing deep to protect against Stanicek's power, stood transfixed, as much unable as unwilling to watch the ball carry out of the park.

Had Rath even wanted to watch it clear the chain-link fence, Avery Avenue and the railroad tracks beyond, he couldn't. The ball left much too quickly. By the time the sound of his hit reached Rath, everyone knew it was a home run, the fifth of the season for Stanicek and the 27th of his college career, just one short of the NU school record, which he would break four days later by hitting two opposite-field home runs in a double-header against Kearney State.

Afterward, Nebraska head coach John Sanders said Stanicek showed again that "he's a legitimate player."

The bases were loaded when Stanicek came to bat in the bottom of the sixth inning in a seven-inning game which had just resumed after a 45-minute rain delay. The grand slam home run cut into a five-run Oklahoma State lead and gave Nebraska a chance to win, something the Cornhuskers did not do that particular afternoon in March.

But the loss could not diminish what Stanicek did.

He got the job done in a critical situation, just as he has done throughout his three seasons at Nebraska. Stanicek wasted no time in establishing himself as an out-of-the-ordinary college baseball player.

Two years ago, as a freshman playing in a pressure-packed Big Eight Conference post-season tournament at Oklahoma City, he hit .429, driving in eight runs, hitting three home runs, the only ones in the tournament's seven games, and earning all-tournament recognition.

He finished his freshman year with a school record 12 home runs. In his first two seasons (128 games) Stanicek hit 22 home runs and drove in 183 runs.

Earlier this spring when the Cornhuskers opened conference play by splitting a four-game series with Oklahoma State, he went 8-for-12, drove in seven runs and scored six times, even though pitchers have long since learned it's in their best interest to work around him.

As the Big Eight season opened, his batting average was .478 and his slugging percentage was over 1,000.

For three years now, Stanicek has been consistent at the plate and in the field, facts which indicate he may not be back for his senior season at Nebraska.

He's no Dr. Strangelove around first base, no hands of stone, and he has the hitting numbers to be a high-round pick in the major league free agent draft. Stanicek was a

10th-round pick of the St. Louis Cardinals out of Rich East High School, but he was looking to begin his college education first.

Nebraska and Clemson offered him that opportunity, the Cornhuskers in the form of a baseball scholarship, the Tigers with a football scholarship and the promise he could play baseball, too.

Stanicek was a defensive back in high school, and if he had envisioned a future in professional football, he might have been playing for top-ranked Clemson in its Orange Bowl game with Nebraska on New Year's night.

"I figured I had more of a chance at pro baseball," Stanicek said.

He admits he'd like to be drafted this spring so he could get a start at such a career. "But I'm not going to get my hopes up.

"It won't crush me if I don't, but I know deep down inside, I want to be drafted (high)," he said.

Sanders certainly wouldn't stand in Stanicek's way if the right professional opportunity came along. A year ago, the Cornhusker head coach was already saying: "Don't count on Steve being a senior at Nebraska."

Stanicek has always hit well. He batted .480 as a high school senior. .315 as a freshman at Nebraska and .314 last season. He's been consistent, and he's learned to hit the ball where it's pitched.

According to Sanders, as a freshman, Stanicek tried to pull everything to left field. Last season, he worked on hitting the ball the other way, an adjustment for which he obviously didn't have to sacrifice any home run power.

"The way we look at hitting is, if a player comes in as a dead pull hitter, we try to get him to take it the other way some, especially if he's someone as strong as Stanicek, who can hit a ball 400 feet to right center field. Steve can hit a pop fly to right and pull it out," said Sanders, who spent five years playing professional baseball in the Kansas City and New York Mets organizations.

Stanicek has always had the timing of a home run hitter, and he's added some strength since he arrived at Nebraska. He was able to bench press 200 pounds when he came to Lincoln. After a year of working on NU Strength Coach Boyd Epley's weight training program, Stanicek had increased his bench press to more than 300 pounds.

Rival head coach Gary Ward of Oklahoma State ranks Stanicek with his own first baseman Jim Traber and Oklahoma's John Russell as the best hitters in the Big Eight.

Unwilling to sit on what he's accomplished, Stanicek has continued to make adjustments in his approach to hitting.

This season he's become more patient, and "I've been working on getting off the plate a bit and extending my arms more," he said.

As a result, he's walked more and struck out less, after leading the team in strikeouts each of his first two seasons.

Getting Stanicek out by any method has become increasingly difficult. One scout who watched him play in Pan American University's Citrus Tournament in early March, said the only way to get Stanicek out was to pitch

him inside. Another scout, who watched the same tournament, decided the only way to get him out was to pitch him away.

The disparate opinions illustrate the problem; neither way will work.

Despite his ability to hit for average, drive in runs, and field his position, Stanicek's reputation has been built on his sometimes awesome home run power.

One Saturday afternoon in batting practice, during the Big Eight tournament his freshman year, Stanicek hit five balls in a row out of Oklahoma City's All Sports Stadium, where the fences are 300 feet down each foul line and 415 feet to dead center field. Two of the last three went over the 415-foot sign.

Three nights later, he hit two during warm-ups, the second apparently in anger over fouling off several pitches. "Space agent time," Stanicek said just before he hit the baseball up near the top of a towering light standard in the left center field power alley.

Whether it's with the bat (below) or with the glove (opposite page), Nebraska's Steve Stanicek has proven himself not only one of the top talents in the Big Eight, but a top pro baseball prospect for a draft that may end his Husker career prematurely.



Defense Not Uncoordinated, But Charlie Takes Charge

There will be few changes in Blackshirt routine, McBride says, after Osborne calls for change on organizational chart.

Tom Osborne had no quarrel with the Cornhusker football defense in 1981. The Big Eight champions led the conference in passing, scoring and total defense and were No. 1, 4 and 6, respectively, in those categories nationally.

So it wasn't that the Blackshirts were uncoordinated.

Still, Head Coach Osborne reversed his field just prior to spring practice and announced that Defensive Line Coach Charlie McBride would become his new defensive coordinator. The position had been abandoned in 1981 after four-year coordinator Lance Van Zandt moved on to the New Orleans Saints.

Osborne had said he didn't think such a role was necessary after Van Zandt departed, "and I thought things went fairly well last year," he said.

But there were some organizational areas that needed shoring up. "Particularly at halftime of a game or during team work in practice, there came times when it was good to have one guy designated as a spokesman," Osborne said.

"When you have four guys (McBride, Linebacker Coach John Melton, Ends Coach George Darlington and Secondary Coach Bob Thornton), you worry about stepping on somebody's toes, so you don't say anything. This eliminates that problem," he said.

Osborne said he spends about 80 percent of his time with the offense, and he had "no strong feelings about the need to have a defensive coordinator, but there comes a time when it seems like a



Charlie McBride

good idea to have one. This in no way minimizes the importance of George, John and Bob."

McBride in his fifth year at Nebraska, is no stranger to his new role. He spent one season as defensive coordinator and line coach at Wisconsin before moving to Nebraska. He was the Badgers' offensive line coach for six years and coached at Arizona State for three years.

The Chicago native was a standout end and punter for Colorado's Big Eight championship team in 1961 and

played in the Orange Bowl. He also played a year for the Denver Broncos.

McBride said the appointment was "an honor at a school like Nebraska, but being a coordinator and titles as such have not been a big thing to me. I've been in situations where we've had coordinators and haven't had coordinators, and most of them have been successful.

"We felt last year was successful, but at times I felt — and Tom must have, too — that somebody had to give the players the leadership besides the captains.

"I've never been the high-powered type of person who says, 'This is the way it's going to be.' I believe in letting the coaches coach. I'll help them any way I can. There will be very few changes. All three coaches I work with are capable of being the defensive coordinator."

Although his title was upgraded, McBride said, "Under no circumstances did I take it with the idea that it was a stepping-stone situation for a head job. My interest in the future would be more in pro football than a head college coach. I don't think there's a better situation in college football than the one I have."

McBride will continue to call the defensive signals during games, as he did last year. "Basically," he said, "I was doing what a coordinator does, anyway. There will just be more organizational things.

"There are times when the decision has to be made by somebody and apparently Tom or I will make it."